



**Western School Board  
of Prince Edward Island**

Policy: EF  
**Subject: Nutrition**

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**Policy Statement:** The Western School Board believes that nutrition has a significant impact on the health and academic achievement rates of students. Good nutrition is essential for healthy growth and development, and reduces the risk of obesity, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis. The Board believes it is critical to establish healthy eating behaviours in childhood so as to provide children and youth with the opportunity to develop healthy eating behaviours for life. Healthy eating behaviours begin at home in early childhood and later become a cooperative effort between the home and the school.

The Board will mandate schools to encourage and maintain supportive environments which promote healthy food choices, both in the foods available at school and through educational programs. The Board provides regulations to assist schools in achieving the objectives of this policy.

The Board will improve **student access to food** by: improving access by all students to healthy, safe, reasonably priced, attractively presented food choices; and will attempt to reduce hunger among children living with food insecurity, through enhanced access to healthy foods within the school setting, provided in a non-stigmatizing manner.

The Board **recognizes that the quality of food available** at school is an important determinant of healthy eating in children. Enhanced healthy eating will be achieved by providing healthy food and beverage choices in cafeterias, vending machines, canteens and school food programs and using healthy food choices, or non-food items for fundraising activities and campaigns. The regulations are not meant to be used by teachers and administrators as a tool to evaluate students' lunches from home.

The Board believes that **nutrition education** is important and most effective if a comprehensive approach involving the school and broader community is used. Teachers and school staff are a valuable resource in helping students understand the relationship between nutrition, health and physical activity and developing the knowledge, positive attitudes and skills necessary to make healthy food choices for life.

While recognizing that parents are ultimately responsible for their child's nutritional health, schools should work with their parent groups and other community partners to encourage and support parents to:

- ensure that their children eat a healthy breakfast,
- pack healthy lunches, and
- eat healthy meals at home.

The following regulations are set out to assist schools to achieve the objectives of the Western School Board Nutrition Policy. These were identified in consultation with lead schools in the Western School Board. There are several documents available to support schools with adherence to these regulations; these are listed at the end of the "Regulations" section.

Three sections follow: 1) student access to food; 2) quality of food available at school; and 3) nutrition education.

## **Regulations:**

### **1.0 Student Access to Food**

#### Programming

- All schools will continue to participate in and promote the PEI School Milk Program.
- All schools are encouraged to stock an emergency food cupboard with healthy choices for students in need.
- Schools are encouraged to provide breakfast or snack programs when a need is identified, which will:
  - be open to all students but will not be promoted as a replacement for breakfast eaten at home; and will
  - follow the Keys to Success (best practice program standards) from *Breakfast for Learning*. (Appendix A)

### **2.0 Pricing**

Schools will support healthy food and beverage choices by pricing approaches which encourage students to choose healthy foods and beverages over less healthy foods and beverages when they are sold at school.

### **3.0 Promotion and Advertising**

Schools will work to develop an environment that promotes healthy eating by:

- promoting and/or advertising only healthy food and beverage choices [those in the “Foods to Serve Most Often” (Appendix B) and “Foods to Serve Sometimes” (Appendix C) lists in the *Guide to Food Choices*; also refer to the Healthy Eating Alliance’s Smart Eating Guide Poster].
- not accepting advertising of food products for unhealthy food and beverage choices [those in the “Foods to Serve Least Often” list (Appendix D)].
- giving priority display space to foods from the “Foods to Serve Most Often” and “Foods to Serve Sometimes” food lists over the “Foods to Serve Least Often”(e.g. placement of fruits and vegetables at student eye level, counter-top refrigerators, etc.).
- displaying attractive, current promotional materials (e.g. posters, displays, etc) related to healthy eating throughout schools.
- carrying materials that support the Nutrition Policy and Regulations in school resource centres (e.g. books, videos, pamphlets).
- participating in PEI Healthy Eating Alliance and Nutrition Month activities, where possible.

#### **4.0 Time to Eat**

Schools shall:

- allow a minimum of 20 minutes for students to eat lunch.
- encourage that foods are eaten after outside play in the elementary setting, whenever possible.
- assure that lunch is eaten in a calm positive environment.

#### **5.0 Student Choice**

- School staff, cafeteria staff and parent groups should involve students in planning school food choices.
- Students should be encouraged to choose food from the “Foods to Serve Most Often” and “Foods to Serve Sometimes” lists.
- Schools may provide microwaves in classrooms and/or cafeteria settings to broaden the range of food choices for students.

#### **6.0 Quality of Food and Beverages Available at School**

6.1 Criteria for Food and Beverages Available in Canteens, Cafeterias, School Lunch, Breakfast Programs, and Snack Programs.

- Foods and beverages sold or made available at school for lunch, canteen, and breakfast and snack programs will be selected from the “Foods to Serve Most Often” or “Foods to Serve Sometimes” lists and will emphasize vegetables and fruit; lower fat white and chocolate milk; whole grain products; lean meats; foods prepared with little or no fat; and foods low in salt, sugar, and caffeine.
- Foods would rarely come from the *Foods to Serve Least Often* List.
- Energy drinks, such as Red Bull, Full Throttle, Rockstar, Amp, Stoked, SoBe Adrenaline Rush and the like are prohibited from being on School Board property.
- Teachers and administrators will encourage students to drink water.
- Schools should try to use local products first, where possible.

6.2 Criteria for vending machines

- All food and beverages in vending machines which are accessible to students will be selected from the “Healthy Vending Machine and Canteen Foods” list (Appendix E). Vending machines will not be used to sell carbonated soft drinks, fruit drinks, fruit juices with less than 100% juice, sports drinks or energy drinks.
- Schools will manage and operate vending machines in accordance with the terms of this Policy.

## **7.0 Special Functions**

Although healthy foods should be promoted for daily consumption, as well as on celebration days, it is recognized that schools need to be flexible for celebration days. Schools are encouraged to offer healthy foods or non-food items as a reward to students for good behaviour, achievement, or participation in fundraising activities.

## **8.0 Fundraising**

Fundraising activities by schools and parent groups will centre on non-food products or healthy food choices from the “Foods to Serve Most Often” or “Foods to Serve Sometimes” lists.

## **9.0 Food Safety**

- Administrators will ensure that school staff and parent volunteers are familiar with safe food handling practices.
- Schools will adhere to the Provincial Anaphylaxis Policy.
- Students should wash their hands properly before eating or preparing food.

## **10.0 Nutrition Education**

### **10.1 Curriculum**

- The Board will work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and community partners to promote the further development and enhancement of a current, relevant nutrition education curriculum and enhance the resources available to teachers to support their nutrition education activities.
- Schools should use a comprehensive approach to nutrition education involving the whole school community (families, individuals and organizations in the community) in nutrition education activities to positively influence students’ nutrition knowledge, attitudes, skills and eating habits.
- When possible, schools should incorporate nutrition education into other subject areas and outside classroom activities.
- Schools should capitalize on the educational opportunities school food services provide and coordinate these services with classroom teaching.
- Schools will support opportunities for staff development and training for effective delivery of nutrition curriculum.

### **10.2 Role Models**

Recognizing the importance of role modelling in promoting healthy eating, teachers, administrators, and school staff should act as positive role models to promote healthy eating within the classroom and school environment.

## **11.0 Evaluation**

School districts/boards will monitor adherence to and review the effectiveness of this policy.

**Supportive documents available** in *The School Healthy Eating Toolkit* which is available online at [www.healthyeatingpei.ca](http://www.healthyeatingpei.ca):

- Fund-raising Alternatives
- Microwave Safety
- Peanut Alternatives
- Practical suggestions for emergency food cupboard
- Lunch program options
- Plain language document explaining the guidelines for parents (one page)
- Short summary piece available for schools to use in their newsletters and handbook
- A comprehensive Q&A document that provides the rationale for each item of the guidelines.

## **Breakfast for Learning (Appendix A)**

### **Programs and Events: Best Practices Project**

Beginning in 2000, *BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING* invited communities to participate in discussions to support quality delivery of child nutrition programs throughout the country. This country-wide consultation, in association with several partners and funded by Health Canada, provided participants with the opportunity to share their experiences and stories, successes and challenges, and their own best practices.

At the end of this process, a national conference was held in Ottawa. Child nutrition volunteers and community leaders from across the country met to develop consistent, country-wide guidelines for best practices that ultimately ensure nutritional health for our children.

### **Keys to Success**

The next several years were spent analyzing, evaluating and piloting these standards. The best practices required an effective, accessible and barrier-free delivery vehicle that allowed programs to implement and self-assess at their own pace - resulting in the Keys to Success program.

In September 2006, Keys to Success was launched through the Eat Right! Be Bright! Club Website - a one-stop interactive website dedicated to child nutrition. Through The Club website, hundreds of programs have registered and are working through the Keys - achieving excellence in child nutrition!

### **Keys at a Glance**

Key 1: Menu for Learning - Food Quality

Key 2: Effective Program Management - Partnerships and Collaboration

Key 3: Who is Served - Access & Participation

Key 4: Staff and Volunteers - Inclusive and Efficient

Key 5: Creating a Positive Environment for Children - Safe, Nurturing and Fun

Key 6: Money Matters - Financial Accountability

Key 7: Measuring Success - Evaluation

To access and learn more about Breakfast for Learning and the Keys to Success, visit [www.breakfastforlearning.ca](http://www.breakfastforlearning.ca) [Eat Right! Be Bright! the Club site.](#)