

Guideline 3: Nutrition Services

Audio Descriptive Text

Title: Chapter 3. The School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity; Guideline 3: Nutrition Services. Image of report cover, School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity. Image of Active Child icon. Image of USDA logo, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Video Summary

- Guideline 3: Provide a quality school meal program and ensure that students have appealing, healthy food and beverage choices offered outside of the school meal program.
- All students are eligible to participate in federally sponsored school meal programs, regardless of income level.
- Putting nutrition standards in place for all foods and beverages available outside of the school meal program can be an effective strategy to ensure healthier foods and beverages are offered.

Audio Script

Guideline 3: Provide a quality school meal program and ensure students have appealing, healthy food and beverage choices offered outside of the school meal program.

Schools are in a unique position to promote healthy dietary behaviors and help ensure appropriate food and nutrient intake among their students. Many schools provide students with access to food and beverages in various venues across the school campus, including meals served in the cafeteria and competitive foods in other locations (for example school stores, vending machines, and school fundraisers). Schools should model and reinforce healthy dietary behaviors by ensuring that only nutritious and appealing foods and beverages are provided in all venues.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture administers the federally sponsored school meal programs, including the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. All students are eligible to participate in the school meal programs, regardless of income level. However, some students may be eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.

School meal programs should offer nutritious and appealing foods and beverages that meet federally defined nutrition standards based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Overall, students who eat the school meals tend to consume more milk, fruits, and vegetables and they tend to have better nutrient intake than those who do not participate. Putting nutrition standards in place for all foods and beverages sold or served outside of the school meal program can be an effective strategy to ensure healthier foods and beverages are offered in the school. These foods and beverages are called competitive foods and should meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.