

## Topic-Specific Content Requirements

Nutrition Services		
Policy Requirement	Recommended Evidence-based Implementation Strategy* and Resources	Suggested Policy Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs must meet the NSLP and SBP guidelines <a href="#">7 CFR 210</a> and <a href="#">7 CFR 220</a>.</li> <li>• <b><u>16 V.S.A. § 1264</u></b> Vermont public schools must participate in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.</li> <li>• <b><u>16 V.S.A. § 1264.</u></b> Vermont public schools in which 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals that offer summer programs for 15 hours per week or more must offer a meal and/or snack as part of the summer program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize resources from of the <a href="#">Smarter Lunchrooms Movement</a> to equip school lunchrooms with evidence-based tools that improve child eating behaviors and thus improve the health of children.</li> <li>• Offer summer meals through the Summer Food Service Program or through the National School Lunch Program regardless of the percent of students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals.</li> <li>• Specify strategies to increase participation in school meal programs. See <a href="#">School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vermont Agency of Education Child Nutrition Programs</a> and <a href="#">Hunger Free Vermont</a> provide assistance to schools in establishing school breakfast and lunch programs, and also implementing Universal Meals Program.</li> <li>• Use of Agency of Education and Team Nutrition's Resource Library, technical assistance tools and materials, recipes, and guidance to improve the quality of school meals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools will provide lunch in compliance with the USDA School Lunch and Breakfast Program requirements.</li> <li>• All school menus are based on the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.</li> <li>• Schools provide food service flexibilities, such as breakfast in the classroom, grab and go meals, to increase meals access.</li> <li>• Schools shall provide periodic food promotions to encourage taste testing of healthy new foods being introduced on the menu.</li> <li>• The district shall use the USDA's Smarter Lunchroom tools and other resources available on the USDA website to increase participation</li> <li>• Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated.</li> </ul>
<p>Schools in Federal Child Nutrition Programs may apply a geographic preference when purchasing unprocessed locally grown or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies and resources for purchasing local food and beverage products directly from farmers, manufacturers, distributors, etc., are available:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools use USDA geographical preference rules to access local food and beverages whenever possible.</li> </ul>

<p>locally raised agricultural products <a href="#">7 CFR §210.21</a> paragraph (g) <i>geographic preference</i>). See also <a href="#">USDA Buy American memo</a></p>	<p><a href="#">USDA local procurement resources</a>  <a href="#">VT AOE procurement resources</a>  <a href="#">VT FEED local procurement guide</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nutrition Services will coordinate its menus with seasonal production of local farms and with production in school gardens so that school meals will reflect seasonality and local agriculture.</li> </ul>
<p>School food service managers must meet minimum professional standards as stated in <a href="#">Section 306 HHFKA</a>, per the July 1, 2015 final rule for <a href="#">NSLP Professional Standards</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The state agency provides annual training in food service and administrative practices for school food service staff.</li> <li>● <a href="#">Vermont School Nutrition Association</a> provides ongoing training opportunities</li> <li>● <a href="#">VT FEED</a> offers a range of professional development opportunities around the state, as well as customized courses upon request</li> <li>● School nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet annual continuing education/training requirements in the <a href="#">USDA Professional Standards for child nutrition professionals</a>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools shall ensure that professional development in the areas of food service, administrative practices, and nutrition is provided for food service managers and staff.</li> </ul>
<p>Schools participating in the school meals programs shall make free potable water available to children in the meal service areas <a href="#">Section 203 of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Improving Access to Drinking Water in Schools</a> is a Bridging the Gap and CDC resource to help schools address water accessibility in their wellness policy. See also <a href="#">Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools</a>, another CDC resource.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools make free, potable water available during the school meals service periods.</li> <li>● Plain drinking water is available throughout the school day at no cost to students.</li> </ul>

## Evaluation of Nutrition Services

(School Food Service administrative review process from AOE)

Policy Requirement	Recommended Evidence-based Implementation Strategy and Resources	Suggested Policy Language
<p>The USDA requires an administrative review process according to <a href="#">7CFR 210.18</a>. It is to ensure that the School Food Authority and participating schools under its jurisdiction shall comply with all provisions of 7 CFR <a href="#">210</a>, <a href="#">220</a>, and <a href="#">245</a>.</p> <p>The State agency will examine records during the Administrative Review, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of the current wellness policy,</li> <li>• Documentation on how the policy and assessments are made available to the public,</li> <li>• The most recent assessment of implementation of the policy, and</li> <li>• Documentation- update, stakeholders, public notification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) handles the administrative review process. The objectives of the Administrative Reviews are to (1) determine whether the School Food Authority meets program requirements (2) provide technical assistance (3) secure any needed corrective action and (4) assess fiscal action, if applicable. The VT AOE and the USDA provide numerous training resources to help a school food authority prepare for a review.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Administrative Review Guidance</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vermont AOE's Child Nutrition homepage</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vermont AOE's policy/administration page</a></li> <li>• Vermont AOE's guide to <a href="#">School Food Service for New Program Managers</a> (see Chapter 18: Administrative Review)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school food service program is in good standing with all USDA meal program regulations, such as nutrition specifications, civil rights and food safety.</li> </ul>
<p>Information on the School Nutrition Environment shall be available to the public <a href="#">Section 209 of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools shall report on the school nutrition environment to the public, including information on food safety inspections, local wellness policies, school meal program participation, nutritional quality of program meals, etc.</li> <li>• Posting examples include the school website, newsletters, school bulletin boards, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school food service publicizes its program administration materials. Examples include meeting minutes, participation rates, health inspection results, and its nutritional compliance results.</li> </ul>

## Guidelines for Competitive Foods and Beverages

Legal Requirement	Recommended Evidence-based Implementation Strategy* and Resources	Suggested Policy Language
<p>All foods sold during the school day (12:00am to 30 minutes after the official end of school day) outside the federally supported meal programs, must comply with the Smart Snack nutrition standards of the <a href="#">Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, 2010 (HHFKA See: 7CFR210.11</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">USDA Smart Snacks concise document</a> outlines the nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools.</li> <li>● <a href="#">USDA Smart Snacks in Schools website</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">School Food Service for New Program Managers</a> (see Chapter 14: Smart Snacks (Competitive Foods))</li> <li>● Identify if your snacks meet the standards with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation <a href="#">product calculator</a>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During the school day, 12:00 am - 30 minutes after official end of school day, schools sell foods that meet the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards for all additional non-meal foods, such as those from vending machines, a la carte, school concessions, fundraisers, etc.</li> <li>● Items meeting Smart Snack standards, but traditionally served as dessert, such as cookies and ice cream, shall not be sold to students during the lunch period.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no exemption in Vermont for fundraisers that do not meet the Smart Snack standards during the school day.</p> <p>*The standards do not apply to off-campus events or to concessions for sporting events, plays and concerts, provided they are outside of the school day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply standards to ALL foods even those sold during non-school hours, at sporting events, on week-ends and at off-campus fundraising events.</li> <li>● Encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. See <a href="#">Tips for Healthy Fundraisers Guide</a>.</li> <li>● <a href="#">Active Schools Fundraising</a> offers a healthy, easy fundraising option for your school group that is centered-around physical activity AND helps your school and community create a healthy environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools will consider options of selling non-food items or participating in other events to support the school and community such as gift wrap, light bulbs, plant sales, books, etc.</li> <li>● Fundraising activities will not promote branded products (for example, Domino’s Dough Raising Program, McTeacher’s Night, Amazon Smile, branded candy sales, etc.)</li> <li>● School will develop creative campus fundraisers based on healthy food items, integrating farm grown produce where appropriate</li> </ul>

<p>Standards for all foods provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g. in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Healthy party ideas are available from the <a href="#">Alliance for a Healthier Generation</a> and from the <a href="#">USDA</a>.</li> <li>● Parents will be made aware in advance of when a celebration with food is taking place and what is to be served.</li> <li>● Non-food celebrations will be promoted and a list of ideas will be available to parents and teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas</li> <li>● Classroom celebrations will focus on activities, rather than food.</li> <li>● The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a <a href="#">list of alternative ways to reward children</a>.</li> <li>● Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.</li> </ul>
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## Nutrition Promotion

Legal Requirement	Recommended Evidence-based Implementation Strategy and Resources	Suggested Policy Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School meals are promoted by the food service program and the school to encourage program participation and improve the diets of children and reduce childhood obesity. <u>Section 204 of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act added 42 U.S.C. 1758b</u></li> <li>Schools must identify, near or at the beginning of serving lines, what foods constitute unit priced reimbursable meals <u>7 CFR 210.10(a)(2)</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition promotion should focus on increasing National School Lunch and Breakfast Program participation. Tested strategies for nutrition promotion include (1): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimizing cafeteria layouts is a proven method to increase school meal participation, see: <u>Smarter Lunchrooms</u> and other research from <u>Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs</u></li> <li>Healthy cooking workshops in the school kitchen for parents, students and other community members <u>Hunger Free VT Learning Kitchen</u></li> <li>Numerous nutrition promotion materials are available from <u>USDA Team Nutrition</u></li> <li>Local food promotion materials are available from <u>VT FTS Network</u></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Morning bus routes will be scheduled to allow students to arrive at school in time to eat breakfast.</li> <li>Students are prohibited from leaving campus for lunch.</li> <li>Signage in the food service area indicates the daily menu offerings and required minimum selections needed to make a complete meal.</li> <li>The district discourages consumption of competitive foods in place of school meals by limiting competitive food choices during mealtimes in the cafeteria.</li> <li>Encourage increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and culture of trying new foods in the school cafeteria.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing/Promotion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies for food and beverage marketing that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the smart snacks and school nutrition standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School-based marketing should be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion.</li> <li>Schools exclude all forms of advertising and promotion from candy, fast food restaurants, or soft drinks. 🚫</li> <li>Schools price nutritious foods and beverages at a lower cost while increasing the price of less nutritious foods and beverages. 🚫</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School shall label/mark healthy food items available so students know which the healthy items are.</li> <li>The healthiest choices, such as salads and fruit, will be prominently displayed in the cafeterias to encourage students to make healthy choices.</li> <li>Local food selections shall be marked so students connect the foods they eat with the farms that produce them.</li> </ul>

### **Farm to School Programs** 🔄

6 V.S.A. § 4721 .

There is created in the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFMM) the Rozo McLaughlin Farm to School program to award local grants for the purpose of helping Vermont schools develop food, farm, nutrition, and garden curriculum, changes in cafeteria infrastructure and preparation of local foods, and to build relationships with their communities, particularly local farmers and producers.

#### Farm to School Grant Program

- Instruction and assessment for students to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors, including opportunities for agricultural education, to become agriculturally literate and engaged, should focus on skill development and opportunities to eat local, fresh, and nutritious food.
- Organizations that provides technical assistance to schools developing or implementing a Farm to School program, or other agriculturally-related school activities - VT FEED Resources and Curricula & Vermont Community Garden Network
- Refer to VT FTS page for list of regional Vermont farm to school technical assistance service
- Using Food Hubs to Create Sustainable Farm to School Programs is a guide produced by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and was funded by a USDA Farm to School grant.
- The Vermont Harvest of the Month, Shelburne Farms, Vermont Community Garden, VT FEED etc., provides ready to go materials for the promote the use of local, seasonal Vermont

- Whenever possible, schools shall collaborate with the greater community, to establish a farm to school program.
- When planning a farm to school program, schools shall incorporate the three C's - community, classroom and cafeteria- into all plans.
- When designing a farm to school activity, there shall be a large diversity of activities associated with the program including, but not limited to taste-tests, farm visits when possible, cooking classes, school gardening, agricultural curriculum and school food program development.
- Schools shall work with USDA Farm to School on learning how to incorporate local food into school meals, while also following procurement policies.
- In the interest of incorporating seasonally appropriate, Vermont grown foods, school food service shall use Harvest of the Month programming.
- Schools shall work with FEED and other regional farm to school nonprofits to complete farm to school evaluation rubric and growth chart.