



July 22, 2014

Dear Parent and Guardians

The new Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards went into effect July 1, 2014.

This guidance from U.S. Department of Agriculture provides updated nutrition standards to all foods and beverages sold across the entire school campus, to students during the school day, outside of the school meals programs. This includes a la carte, school stores, vending machines, snack carts and fundraising. The "school day" is defined as midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day.

Ever since Sodexo's alignment with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's healthier snack and beverage guidelines, Sodexo foodservice has taken a proactive role in managing the snacks and beverages we serve, as well as reviewing menu items to ensure we are fully compliant with these nutrition standards. Many students in schools across the country will see changes to the types of snacks and beverages offered, however we anticipate these changes to be negligible. You can expect that we will be encouraging students to consume a more balanced meal with healthy sides such as fruits and vegetables to compliment a la carte entrees.

Probably of greatest concern to schools across the country is the impact Smart Snacks in Schools will have on food-related fundraisers, after school functions and classroom celebrations. First it is important to emphasize the time that this ruling is in effect. If your school day ends at 3:00 PM, then the nutrition standards only extend to 30 minutes after the end of the school day, or 3:30 PM. With regards to fundraisers, the foods and beverages sold to students must meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. In April, a memo was issued to School Nutrition Directors asking them to gather information to complete a short survey so the Pennsylvania Department of Education could assess the current baseline for the number of fundraisers that are occurring that will not meet the Smart Snacks Standards. Based on this information, the Department has determined that a maximum of five exempt fundraisers will be permitted in each elementary and middle school building per year, and a maximum of ten exempt fundraisers will be permitted in each high school building per year. Each fundraiser may not exceed one school week.

It has become a recognized fact that students who are well nourished are also better prepared to learn. By implementing nutrition standards throughout all corners of the school building, we can enhance the learning environment and contribute to the overall health and well-being of the students. Our district is fully prepared to implement these nutrition standards. Our Sodexo team welcomes the opportunity to speak with you more about the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, as well as share how we are adjusting, if at all, the foodservice program to be compliant with this ruling. We know that as we all work together to find solutions during this change process that we can be successful.

For additional information or questions, please contact Julianne Griffin at 412-732-3300 ext. 1009

Thank you.

Julianne Griffin - Food Service Director-Northgate School District