

# Nourishing Minds

Towards Comprehensive School Community Health: Nutrition Policy Development in Saskatchewan Schools



Saskatchewan Ministry of Education In Partnership with the Ministries of Health and Social Services

October 2009

# **Message from the Minister of Education**

#### The Honourable Ken Krawetz

Education plays an important role in the growth and success of Saskatchewan and its citizens. The Government of Saskatchewan believes that the learning success, well-being and achievement of our young people are vital for securing the future of our province.

Research indicates that students who are physically active and have a wellbalanced nutritious diet have higher academic performance. To ensure that children and youth get the most out of their school years, the Ministry of Education, in partnership with other government ministries and education partners, has developed a new resource that will support all Saskatchewan schools in implementing healthy food standards.



Good nutrition is essential for the proper growth and development of our children and youth. Healthy eating contributes to academic achievement, as well as physical and mental growth. Providing healthy food at an early age supports a lifelong approach to healthy living. Our schools serve as an important access point for nutrition education and healthy eating practices, healthy food policy and modeling of healthy lifestyles.

I encourage you to promote and support healthy living at home, at school and in the community. Together we can build a stronger, healthier Saskatchewan.

Jen Grawet

Honourable Ken Krawetz Deputy Premier Minister of Education

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A special thank you is extended to working committee members from the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Services. Your collaborative effort and commitment to improved student health in Saskatchewan is appreciated.

# Introduction

Health and education are interdependent: healthy students are better learners, and better educated individuals are healthier. Healthy eating is essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, their full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being (Joint Consortium of School Health, 2008). Promoting and supporting the healthy growth and development of children and youth is a shared responsibility among family, school and other agencies such as public health, social services organizations, and government/non-government agencies. The school serves as an important access point for nutrition education, healthy eating practices, healthy food policy and modeling of healthy lifestyles.

School-based nutrition and health interventions can improve academic performance (UNESCO, 2002).

Researchers and policy makers in the health and education fields consider health literacy as a critical pathway linking education to health outcomes, as a causal factor in health disparities between different population groups, and as a predictor of overall population health (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007).

### A Comprehensive School Community Health Approach

The health and well-being of Canadians is linked to a number of factors including: genetics, personal decisions and access to health services, as well as individual behaviours influenced by social, economic, cultural and physical environments. Income, education, employment, housing, access to healthy food, early childhood development, and social supports are determinants that impact individual and community health. To positively influence and affect health and wellbeing, it is important to understand, anticipate and respond to this range of individual and collective factors. Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) is a collaborative approach that invites a broad range of participants to work together to enhance the health and well-being of all students with the potential to influence and impact the health of the whole community.

This document focuses on school division nutrition policy development and implementation consistent with these guidelines resulting in partnerships, planning, promotion and provision of nutritious food in all Saskatchewan schools. It also serves as a common template for other healthy living initiatives that may evolve over time.

In the school, CSCH facilitates improved student achievement and positive behaviours. CSCH encourages and supports the development of children and youth in becoming physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually healthy for life (Adapted from the Canadian Association for School Health, 2007). Therefore, it is important to consider opportunities for integrating health and social development into a school's learning improvement plan in support of the school division's strategic plan for continuous improvement.

The framework for CSCH is internationally recognized for supporting improvements in students' educational outcomes while addressing school community health in a planned, integrated and holistic way. CSCH enhances what already happens in the classroom and motivates the whole school community through actions that provide a strong foundation for school community health. The four integrated components of CSCH are outlined in the diagram below.

# Figure 1: Nutrition Examples within the Four Integrated Components of Comprehensive School Community Health

#### **Healthy Physical Environment**

(e.g., access to healthy food and beverages; ample seating for eating meals; use of proper hand-washing technique; polices and procedures regarding the health and safety of children and youth)

#### **Supportive Social Environments**

(e.g., healthy eating role modeling by school staff, a caring and respectful eating environment, enough time available for students to eat meals)



#### **High-Quality Teaching and Learning**

(e.g., provincial health education curricula; powerful instructional strategies; culturally and developmentally appropriate resources; cross-curricular learning opportunities; informal learning opportunities for students/families)

## Community Engagement and Partnerships

(e.g., school/communities working on programs such as good food boxes, community gardens, parents/community members supportive of and engaged in nutrition policy development)

(See Appendix A for a detailed description of Comprehensive School Community Health)

# **Guiding Principles**

This document is guided by the following principles:

#### **Child and Youth Centred**

 Children and youth within the context of their families and communities are entitled to healthy development, well-being and the ability to reach their full potential.

#### **Equity and Accessibility**

 All children and youth regardless of location, age and abilities are able to access high quality curriculum, instruction, services and programs to meet their diverse needs.

#### **Shared Responsibility**

 Students, families, community members, teachers, administrators, trustees, human service partners and government share responsibility for the education and well-being of children and youth.

#### **Comprehensive and Holistic**

Comprehensive approaches are the most effective means to address the needs of the whole child and youth (i.e. physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to support learning and well-being.



# **Policy Statement**

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to working with school boards to ensure healthy food in schools. It is expected that boards of education in collaboration with schools, youth, School Community Councils, parents and community adopt and fully implement policies consistent with the guidelines provided in this document and limit the availability of products high in salt, sugar and fats. Adopting and fully implementing policies based on these guidelines and aligned with the health education curricula will ensure a consistent nutrition standard for all Saskatchewan schools.

# **Policy Rationale**

#### 1. Nutrition is a Priority

Due to the growing burden of chronic diseases and as part of a strategy to achieve education for all, the World Health Organization's *School Policy Framework: Implementation of the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health* (2008) calls upon member states to develop and implement school policies and programs that promote healthy diets.

#### **Obesity is a concern**

Over the last 25 years, obesity rates for children have tripled, and the combined overweight/obesity rate has grown by 70% (Shields, 2005). The figures for some subpopulations are much higher. The obesity rate for First Nations children is two and one half times higher than the national average. Children of parents with less education and lower income levels and from rural areas also have higher rates (*Active Healthy Kids Canada*, 2006). International comparisons show that Canada as a country has among the highest prevalence of overweight kids (Janssen et al 2005).

Well-balanced nutritious food is important at all ages and stages of life. A child's eating patterns are established early in life and are influenced by family, community, geography, culture and economic status. Childhood is the time to teach enjoyment of a variety of nutritious foods, to develop good eating habits and to establish a healthy relationship with food.

# Food intake requirements are not being met

Seven out of 10 Canadian children aged 4 to 8 years of age do not meet the recommended minimum 5 daily servings of vegetables and fruit. More than 1/3 (37%) of Canadian children aged 4 to 9 years of age do not consume the recommended 2 daily servings of milk products (Garriguet, July 2006).

Children have high nutrient needs in relation to the volume of food they eat; therefore, it is essential to serve foods that are high in nutritional value. Wellbalanced, nutritious food supports growth, physical and mental well-being, healthy weight, and optimal learning (Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan, 2009).

#### 2. Nutrition Impacts Learning

Research has found that generally poor nutrition can negatively affect cognitive ability, concentration and activity levels in the short term (Sorhaindo & Feinstein, 2006), and has been associated with poor academic performance and behaviour issues in the longer term (Alaimo, Olson & Frongillo, 2001).

It is important to note that an increasing number of young children across Saskatchewan are entering the school system from licensed child care facilities. These children enter the school system with an added benefit. A foundation has been established for well-balanced, healthy eating as governed by the child care regulations, policies and guidelines that address nutrition.

School health programs are the essential sequel and complement to early childhood care and development (UNESCO, 2000).

The quality of children's diets has also been found to have an effect on their academic performance. Researchers examined the association between overall diet quality and academic performance across various indicators of diet quality. Students with decreased overall diet quality were significantly more likely to perform poorly on academic assessment (Florence, Asbridge and Veugelers, 2003).

Canadian children are at risk for under nutrition (Dietitians of Canada, 2008). Right now in Saskatchewan, 20 per cent of our 43,000 children live in poverty (Saskatchewan Speech from the Throne, October 22, 2008). As a result, many Saskatchewan children attend school without having the daily nourishment they require.

#### 3. Nutrition Impacts Health

Food is a primary determinant of health for individuals, families and communities.

During childhood, healthy eating that meets the dietary reference intakes is critical for growth and development. The development of proper nutrition habits early in life also has a direct impact on physical health and reduction of risks of diet-related chronic diseases later in life. It is recognized that dietary patterns in childhood and adolescence not only influence the immediate well-being of children but may also have an impact on their long-term health (PHAC, 2004).

#### 4. School Nutrition Environments Impact Health and Learning

The full implementation of comprehensive school community nutrition policies and programs can improve the health and learning potential of children.

Schools exert tremendous influence over children's eating habits and have been described as "the ideal settings to establish and promote healthy eating practices in children and adolescents" (Taylor et al., 2005).

Food is an integral part of school life; many children eat and/or purchase meals and snacks at school. Currently, not all food and beverages available in Saskatchewan schools, offered for sale in vending machines, school cafeterias, as school fundraisers or brought in for special events, are healthy.

# Children eat 1/3 of their daily calories at school

Students, on an average school day, consume about onethird of their calories at school, and a significant amount of that is purchased on site (*School Food Sales and Policies Provincial Report*, 2005). The report is available online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

A healthy school nutrition environment reinforces curriculum learning and offers students an opportunity to practise newly learned skills (Government of Manitoba, 2006).

Education regarding nutrition and health promoting behaviours without modeling and access to healthy eating in schools will not change poor health habits (School Healthy Eating Assessment Tool, Government of British Columbia retrieved December 2008).

# What Have Been the Building Blocks?

Development of nutrition policies and practices are closely linked to Saskatchewan's Core Curriculum, intended to provide all Saskatchewan students with the understanding, skills and confidences necessary for healthy personal and social development.

# Health Education is one of the seven required areas of study\_

Recommended time allocations: Grades 1-6 80 minutes/ week; Grades 7-9 100 minutes/week; 60 minutes per week in French Immersion and Fransaskoise schools (*Core Curriculum: Principles, Time Allocations and Credit Policy*, 2007) Saskatchewan's Health Education curricula (Grades 1-10) address healthy eating as an important health-enhancing behaviour.

Many Saskatchewan schools and communities have already taken significant steps towards the development of healthy nutrition policies, promotion and programs to enhance the lives of children and youth, families and communities. For example:

- the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) in collaboration with the Public Health Nutritionists from Saskatchewan's Health Regions, created a Research Report, Nutrition Guidelines for Schools (2004) as a resource for Boards of Education and school administrators in analyzing nutrition practice and developing nutrition policies. The SSBA commissioned another report, Food for Thought, School Nutrition Policy (2007) to assist and encourage Boards of Education, School Community Councils and school administrators to review and strengthen existing nutrition policies and practices;
- the Ministry of Health and its partners continue to promote health and wellness through initiatives that change conditions and environments, making it easier to choose healthy foods. Health Regions have identified working with schools and school divisions on nutrition polices as a priority. Healthy Foods for My School (Government of Saskatchewan, 2008) provides standards for selecting healthy packaged foods. Previous frameworks such as Healthier Places to Live, Work and Play: A Population Health Promotion Strategy for Saskatchewan (Government of Saskatchewan, 2004) and A Population Health Promotion Framework for Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities (Government of Saskatchewan, 2002), helped lay the groundwork for these initiatives;

the Ministry of Education's Nutrition and Food Safety Recommendations for Nutrition Programs in Saskatchewan Community Schools was developed in partnership with the Public Health Nutritionists from Saskatchewan's Health Regions and is included in the policy framework Building Communities of Hope: Effective Practices for Meeting the Diverse Learning Needs of Children and Youth (2004). It provides the guidelines and expectations for nutrition programming in Community Schools; and,



the Ministry of Education, Early Learning and Child Care, supports licensed family child care homes across the province with a monthly nutrition grant to support well-balanced nutritious meals for children of all ages attending the home. The grant was first made available in June 2007. As part of an education support to the homes, *Mealtime Mentoring* nutrition information sheets were subsequently developed with the collaboration of a Nutrition Reference Group. The information sheets were distributed between May 2008 and May 2009 to the Early Learning and Child Care sector.

School divisions, School Community Councils, schools, youth, families, as well as other professionals and community organizations provide leadership to nutrition policy development and supplying wellbalanced nutritious food in a variety of settings.

# Roles and Responsibilities for Taking Action

**Government** shares responsibility **with communities** for the health, well-being and education of Saskatchewan's children and youth. More specifically, the Minister of Education through *The Education Act, 1995* sets the legislative and policy direction for the provincial education system.

The Minister prepares and distributes recommendations and advice on the management of schools, school divisions, school districts and the division scolaire francophone for trustees, principals and teachers. In addition, the ministry is responsible to:

- provide research, develop evidence-based policy and effective practices models; and,
- engage and consult with stakeholders to ensure a broad array of perspectives and feedback for consideration and integration, when ever possible into new directions and developments.



#### Many partners are needed

Boards of education, school division administrators, teachers and all school staff, students, parents/caregivers, School Community Councils, communities, organizations, and public health all have a role to play in ensuring the food available in schools is nutritious.

**Boards of Education,** through *The Education Act, 1995*, are given responsibility for all aspects of the daily operation of schools. Policies and administrative procedures relating to well-balanced nutritious food sales/offerings at the school are the responsibility of the boards of education.

Leadership by boards of education is critical for establishing effective nutrition policies in schools and for ensuring effective and full implementation. Boards of education support optimal health for students by:

- establishing policies based on *Canada's Food Guide* for healthy food in schools anywhere food
   is sold or offered;
- including healthy food strategies and targets for improvement within their strategic planning for continuous improvement;
- seeking broad-based input, engagement and leadership from school administrators, school staff, students, parents, School Community Councils, and the wider community in the development of school nutrition policy;

As part of the Grade 9 Health Education Curriculum, students are expected to: evaluate a variety of healthy food policies and plan to participate in the development, revision, and/or implementation of a healthy food policy (e.g. fundraising, feasts, canteen sales, and extracurricular events) in the community (e.g. home, school, arena, youth centre).

 supporting professional development and learning opportunities for school divisions, school staff, students, School Community Council members and the wider community that promotes healthy food and healthy eating;

- supporting the use of evidence-based criteria for selecting healthy food to be sold or offered at schools; and,
- ensuring that the board of education policy results in increased access to healthy foods in schools across the division.

Developing new or revising existing nutrition policies provides opportunities for school divisions and their stakeholders to engage in dialogue and planning for Comprehensive School Community Health. It supports alignment of nutrition policy with the key pillars of the Comprehensive School Community Health approach: high-quality teaching and learning, healthy physical environment, supportive social environments, and community engagement and partnerships. School division nutrition policies contribute to providing students with the skills, opportunities and encouragement they need to adopt healthy eating patterns.

**Community, family and youth** participation and leadership in nutrition policy development and implementation ensures active support and shared responsibility for school health promotion and increases the likelihood that children and youth receive consistent messaging and expectations between school, home and community.

# Guidelines for Foods Available in Pre-K-12 Schools in Saskatchewan

The Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines outlined in Appendix B are intended to inform the development of nutrition policies and serve as a resource for school divisions in determining the foods and beverages to be offered or sold in schools.



#### **Healthy Eating Guidelines**

Use the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* for all situations in schools where food is offered or sold. These guidelines were developed to promote the provision of high quality nutritious food for vending machines, canteens, when serving breakfast/lunch/snacks, fundraising, school and classroom celebrations, sporting and other school special events. The *Healthy Eating Guidelines* are based on *Canada's Food Guide* (www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide) and Saskatchewan Ministry of Health's *Healthy Foods for My School* (http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/ healthy-foods-for-my-school).

#### **Menu Planning and Evaluation**

Some schools provide breakfast, snack, and/or lunch programs. For this type of nutrition programming, it is important to have a written menu plan providing the appropriate number of servings from *Canada's Food Guide* in addition to offering nutritious foods based on the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* (see Appendix B).

The guidelines are intended to support healthy eating for all students. Some students may have specialized needs that require a clinical diet. For students with life-threatening allergies, Type 1 diabetes and other medical conditions, check with your school or public health nutritionist for guidelines or policies regarding medical conditions.

#### **Food Safety Standards**

It is important to provide students with access to healthy food and it is equally important to ensure that the food provided is safe. Food provided to students in all situations should be acquired, prepared, stored, and served in a safe manner. Follow good sanitation and food safety practices, including hand-washing procedures. There are provincial regulations and food safety standards for food served in schools, see Appendix B for details. For more information and guidance in applying the regulations and standards, contact a Public Health Inspector in your local health region.

#### Canada's Food Guide is Based on Evidence

*Canada's Food Guide* translates the science of nutrition and health into healthy eating patterns. The guide and a variety of support materials are available at: <u>http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php</u>

Eating Well With Canada's Food Guide, **First Nations, Inuit and Métis** is an adapted version that was created to reflect the values, traditions and food choices of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. A copy of the guide is available at: <u>http://</u> www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php

In addition to English and French, *Canada's Food Guide* has been translated into 10 languages. These guides are available at: <u>http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/order-commander/guide\_trans-trad-eng.php</u>

#### Tools for Implementation and Monitoring

In addition to Appendix B described above, the following tools are appended to provide assistance with the implementation process and monitoring of nutrition policies and initiatives in school divisions and/or schools.

#### **Nutrition Rubric: Appendix C**

The rubric is based on the elements of a Comprehensives School Community Health approach and can be used as a self-reflective assessment tool to provide information about current levels of performance in a Comprehensive School Community Health context and as an evaluation tool to measure progress over time.

#### Healthy School Policy and Guidelines Checklist: Appendix D

This checklist is intended for use by school divisions along with their stakeholders in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and guidelines for healthy school foods. It can also be used as a mechanism to track progress over time.

#### Sample School Division Policy: Appendix E



# **Appendix A**

#### **Comprehensive School Community** Health

# What is Comprehensive School Community Health?

The framework for Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) is internationally recognized for supporting improvements in students' educational outcomes while addressing school community health in a planned, integrated and holistic way. CSCH enhances what already happens in the classroom and motivates the whole school community through actions that encompass four integrated components providing a strong foundation for school community health:

- High Quality Teaching and Learning;
- Healthy Physical Environment;
- Supportive Social Environment; and,
- Community Engagement and Partnerships.

The intent is to harmonize actions in all four components to support and inspire children and youth to realize their full potential as learners and as healthy, productive members of society. As a result, the health of the community as a whole may also be strengthened.

# What does Comprehensive School Community Health do?

Comprehensive School Community Health:

- recognizes that healthy children and youth learn better and achieve more;
- understands that schools can directly influence students' health and behaviours;

- encourages healthy choices, and promotes students' health and well-being;
- incorporates health and wellness into all aspects of teaching and learning;
- links and aligns health and education issues and opportunities; and,
- thrives with the participation, support and engagement of families and the whole community.

#### Why do we need Comprehensive School Community Health?

In the school, CSCH facilitates improved student achievement and positive behaviours. CSCH encourages and supports the development of children and youth in becoming physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually healthy for life.

The goals of CSCH are:

- to promote health and wellness;
- to provide equitable opportunities that address disparities and contribute to academic success;
- to intervene to assist vulnerable children and youth;
- to help to support those who are already experiencing poor health; and,
- to prevent specific diseases, disorders and injury.

Research has shown that CSCH is an effective way to embrace the interdependence between health and educational outcomes that last a lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Health and Education are interdependent; the equation is a simple one:

#### Better Health = Better Learners

#### **Different Terminology, Same Ideas**

The term "Comprehensive School Community Health" is used in Saskatchewan. In other jurisdictions the approach may be known as "Comprehensive School Health", "Health Promoting Schools" or "Coordinated School Health" and its four integrated components may be expressed in different ways. However, the underlying concepts are the same as they are all based on the *World Health Organization's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* (1986).

When We Say	We Mean
High-Quality Teaching and Learning	<ul> <li>High Quality teaching and learning includes:</li> <li>provincial curricula, related resources that are culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate;</li> <li>formal learning experiences and informal learning opportunities that support a sense of personal competency, self-efficacy, and social responsibility;</li> <li>a wide range of opportunities to learn, practise, experience, and demonstrate understanding, confidence, and motivation for living a healthy balanced life; and,</li> <li>planned professional and informal learning opportunities for school and community participants to strengthen CSCH.</li> </ul>
Healthy Physical Environment	<ul> <li>A safe and healthy physical environment includes:</li> <li>the school building and grounds, routes to and from the school, and materials and equipment used;</li> <li>policies, procedures, and regulations regarding the health and safety of children and youth, (e.g. air quality, nutrition, physical activity, pandemic planning, recycling, etc.); and,</li> <li>access to and inclusion of well-balanced nutritious food, opportunities for physical activity, universally available extra/co-curricular activities, etc.</li> </ul>
Supportive Social Environment	<ul> <li>A supportive social environment includes:</li> <li>a positive impact on student learning;</li> <li>a welcoming, caring, and inclusive environment;</li> <li>high quality relationships and leadership among and between staff, students and community in the school environment;</li> <li>relationships that influence and are influenced by the family, cultural perspectives, and the entire community;</li> <li>support for formal practices such as policies, rules, and extra-curricular opportunities that support all four areas of health and well-being (i.e. mental, emotional, physical and spiritual); and,</li> <li>informal role modeling, peer support, leadership, nurturing families, and communities.</li> </ul>
Community Engagement and Partnerships	Community engagement and partnerships support and promote: • student, staff and community learning, health and well-being; • reciprocal relationships that share resources and services within the school community; and, • the context, awareness, development, and appreciation of the peoples of Saskatchewan.

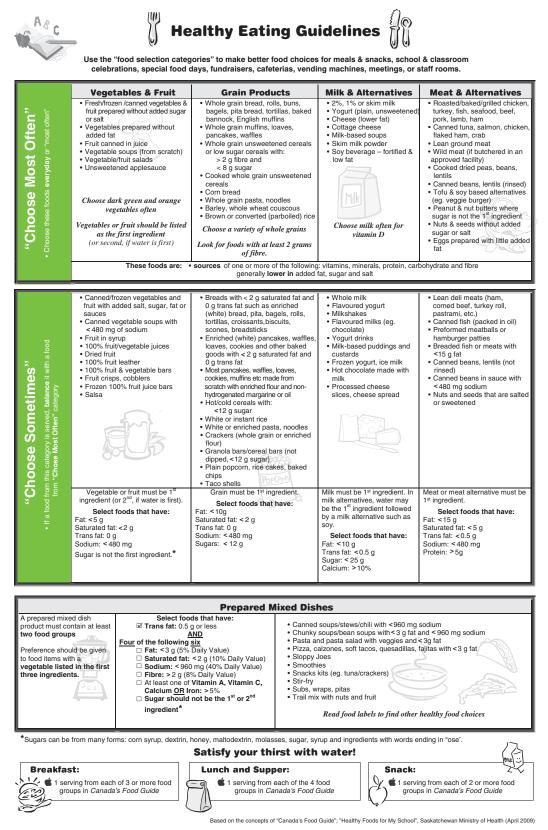
<sup>1</sup> Murray, N.D., Low, B.J., Hollis, C., Cross, A. Davis, S. (2007). Coordinated school health programs and academic achievement: a systematic review for the literature. *Journal of School Health*, 77 (9), 585-599

#### **Concluding Statement**

The CSCH approach promotes health within and beyond the school through collaborative school community partnerships, encouraging values, skills, behaviours, and supportive environments that foster a healthy community for children, youth, their families and neighbours.

## **Appendix B**

#### Healthy Eating, Nutrition, and Food Safety Guidelines for Saskatchewan Schools



#### Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines for Saskatchewan Schools

School nutrition programs can improve the health and learning potential of children. Children have high nutrient needs in relation to the volume of food they eat; therefore, it is essential to serve foods that are high in nutritional value. Also, serve food without excessive fat, salt and sugar. Nutritious food supports growth, good health, healthy weight and optimal learning.

Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines for Saskatchewan Schools promotes the provision of high quality nutritious food and the management of efficient economical food service. These guidelines apply to breakfast/snack/lunch programs in elementary and secondary schools. Many of the concepts can also be applied to other food environments in schools, such as school and classroom celebrations, special food days, fundraisers, cafeterias, canteens, vending machines, meeting or staff rooms. For guidance in applying these guidelines, consult a Public Health Nutritionist in your health region.

#### 1. Menu Planning

- 1.1 The use of seasonally adapted cycle menus is recommended.
- 1.2 Base menus on the nutrition guidelines in *Canada's Food Guide*.

**BREAKFAST** - contains 1 food guide serving from each of 3 food groups **SNACK** - contains 1 food guide serving from each of 2 or more food groups **LUNCH** - contains at least 1 food guide serving from each of the 4 food groups

Serving sizes should be appropriate for the age of the child. Because young children have small stomachs that tend to fill up quickly, they need small nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day. One food guide serving may be divided into smaller amounts and served at both meal and snack time as long as children are meeting the total recommended number of food guide servings each day.

- Include a variety of foods from each food group listed in *Canada's Food Guide*.
- Serve whole grain or multi-grain products, dark green and orange vegetables, and orange fruit more often.
- Prepare foods with little or no added fat, sugar, or salt. For foods that require little preparation, select those that are naturally lower in fat, sugar and salt. Do not restrict nutritious foods such as cheese or peanut butter just because of their fat content. These foods can provide a concentrated source of nutrients for children.

What is One Food Guide Serving?

• Vegetables and Fruit

1 medium sized vegetable or fruit, 125 mL (1/2 cup) fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables or fruit, 250 mL (1 cup) salad, 125 mL (1/2 cup) juice

• Grain Products

1 slice bread (35 g), 30 g cold cereal, 175 mL (3/4 cup) hot cereal, ½ pita or bun (35 g), ½ bagel (45 g), 125 mL (1/2 cup) pasta or rice

• Milk and Alternatives

250 mL (1 cup) milk or fortified milk alternative, 50 g (1 1/2 oz) cheese, 175 mL (3/4 cup) yogurt

#### Meat and Alternatives

75 g (2 1/2 oz) meat, poultry, or fish, 2 eggs, 175 mL (3/4 cup) beans, 150 g (3/4 cup) tofu, 30 mL (2 tbsp) peanut butter

- 1.3 Menus must meet the criteria from the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* in Appendix B.
  - "Choose Most Often"

These foods are sources of one or more of the following: vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrate and fibre. They are generally lower in fat, sugar, and salt. Foods may be served without restriction.

#### "Choose Sometimes"

Most of these foods are sources of one or more of the nutrients iron, calcium, vitamin A, C, or D, but they are also high in fat, sugar or salt, or low in fibre. This makes them less nutritious. If a food from this category is served, it should be combined with a food from the "Choose Most Often" group rather than alone.

#### 2. Menu Evaluation

2.1 Menus should be prepared and evaluated in collaboration with a broad array of interested stakeholders including school personnel, School Community Councils, students and families/community members. A Public Health Nutritionist or Registered Dietitian may be consulted.

#### 3. Food Safety Standards

Food Safety Standards are intended to ensure that food offered to students is acquired, prepared, stored, and served in a safe manner. Provincial regulations and standards apply to food service in schools. For guidance in applying the regulations and standards, contact a Public Health Inspector in your local health region.

3.1 Prior to construction, renovation and operation contact a local Public

Health Inspector for plan approval and arrangements for necessary inspections.

- 3.2 All staff, who handle food, must successfully complete a Certified Food Handling Course prior to, or as soon as possible after, commencement of duties. Contact your health region for a schedule of available courses.
- 3.3 All food used in school nutrition programs must be purchased from an approved source. If there is a question about any source, contact the Public Health Inspector. Examples of sources not approved: private residence, farm-slaughtered meat.
- 3.4 Discuss the acceptability of donated food with a Public Health Inspector. In general, donated foods are not acceptable in school nutrition programs; however, fresh fruit and vegetables, day-old bread & muffins, and uncooked pasta may be acceptable.

<u>Never</u> accept the following foods:

- home canned goods;
- raw milk;
- eggs;
- home processed meat, poultry, fish or dairy products;
- dented, rusted, or bulging canned goods or any food with an expired "best before" date;
- frozen food;
- pastry or dessert items; and,
- left-over food from banquets, parties, etc.
- 3.5 In the case of an emergency, such as suspected contaminated food or food-borne illness, a Public Health Inspector must be contacted.

HEALTHY EATING, NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES WRITTEN BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITIONISTS OF SASKATCHEWAN

March 9, 2004 Revised April 6, 2009

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# **Nutrition Rubric**

Element	Awareness	In Development	Developed	Implemented
Policy	The school division has no nutrition policy, or the policy that exists is not implemented, or the policy allows for food of low nutritional value at school.	The school division has a nutrition policy developed by school and division staff and not based on the provincial guidelines.	■ The school division has a nutrition policy developed by school, division and School Community Council members based on the provincial guidelines outlined in the document <i>Nourishing Minds: Towards</i> <i>Comprehensive School Community</i> <i>Health, Nutrition Policy Development in</i> <i>Saskatchewan Schools</i> but it was not fully implemented or evaluated.	The school division has a policy that follows provincial guidelines outlined in the document <i>Nourishing</i> <i>Minds: Towards Comprehensive</i> <i>School Community Health, Nutrition</i> <i>Policy Development in Saskatchewan</i> <i>Schools</i> which is implemented and evaluated in all schools across the division. School staffs, students, School Community Councils, caregivers and the community are involved in developing and implementing the policy.
High-Quality Teaching and Learning	<ul> <li>Provincial health education curricula are not being implemented.</li> <li>Teachers of health education have limited to no training or resources/supports for an effective health education program.</li> <li>It appears that little to no learning opportunities exist for students and their families to learn about healthy food choices.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provincial health education curricula are referred to in unit planning.</li> <li>Healthy eating resources and supports are available to teachers of health education.</li> <li>Students learn about healthy food options but there is still a gap between school and home; caregivers/families are not engaged.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Healthy eating as part of the provincial health education curricula is emphasized and supported by the school nutrition policy.</li> <li>Evaluated and recommended healthy eating resources that are a strong fit to provincial health education curriculum are used.</li> <li>Opportunities exist for caregivers to learn about healthy eating.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provincial health education curricula are implemented as intended. Understandings, skills, and confidences are reinforced where appropriate in the school nutrition policy.</li> <li>A variety of recommended, culturally sensitive, evaluated and developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and healthy eating resources are used.</li> <li>Teachers of health education have access to and support for continued professional development opportunities regarding healthy eating.</li> <li>Students, families and communities are involved and engaged in healthy nutrition. Caregivers are receiving information and are actively involved</li> </ul>
				with nutrition at school.

Element	Awareness	In Development	Developed	Implemented
				A clear and consistent planned use of other informal healthy eating learning opportunities is included.
High-Quality Teaching and Learning	Students are not aware of school nutrition policy.	Students have limited awareness of school nutrition policy.	Students are aware of the school nutrition policy and are involved in selecting nutritious foods for their schools.	Students are involved in all steps of policy development, implementation, and evaluation.
)	Chool staff regularly model poor choices (e.g., unhealthy food choices, skipping meals).	☐ School staffs are making efforts to model healthier food choices.	School staff frequently model healthy food choices.	School staff promote the school nutrition policy and plan for and model healthy food choices and behaviours.
	Students are not washing their hands before or after eating.	Some hand-washing is done but is inconsistent.	Students are encouraged and reminded to wash their hands before and after eating and monitored during mealtimes.	☐ Students and staff wash their hands before and after eating following proper hand-washing technique as recommended by Public Health.
	☐ Students rush to find seats in a classroom or lunchroom and may be eating where there is no chair or desk/table top available (the room is crowded).	☐ Students have access to seating and desk/table tops but the eating area is crowded.	Students have access to ample seating.	Every student has access to a chair and desk/table top and enough room to access his or her meal comfortably.
Healthy Physical Environment	Noon hour television programming at school is not monitored for appropriateness.	Noon hour television programs are somewhat monitored for content.	Noon hour television watching is monitored and other activity options are offered.	Social activities are encouraged and offered during mealtimes. (Visiting, tabletop games when finished, music, physical activity, etc.)
	Students do not have enough time to eat.	☐ Students can continue to eat regardless of whether they are dismissed from the meal.	Enough time is set aside for students to eat lunch; dismissal from the class/lunchroom varies and meets the needs of students.	At least 20 minutes is provided for students to eat lunch. Flexible mealtimes and snack times meet the needs of all students.
	Supervision of students is limited during mealtimes, and/ or supervisors do not have any training regarding establishing and maintaining a caring and respectful environment.	Each class/lunchroom has a supervisor, but the supervisor has not been provided with training regarding establishing and maintaining a caring and respectful environment.	Each class/lunchroom has a supervisor and they have had some training and support regarding establishing and maintaining a caring and respectful environment.	Lunchroom supervisors are provided with on-going support and training regarding effective practices in establishing and maintaining caring and respectful environments.

Element	Awareness	In Development	Developed	Implemented
	Healthy food choices are not available or very limited at school (e.g., vending machines, canteens, cafeterias).	Healthy food choices at school constitute less than 50% nutritious options (e.g., vending machines, canteens, cafeterias).	☐ At school, only 75% of healthy food choices are offered as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> (e.g., vending machines, canteens, and cafeterias).	At school, only healthy food choices are offered as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> or the school has a policy that indicates vending machines are not to be made available in the school. ( <i>One exception would be</i> <i>milk availability</i> ).
Healthy Physical Environment	Food available during school activities/events (dances, BBQ's, etc.) is not nutritious and considered "junk" food.	During school events, healthy nutritious foods are offered at least 50% of the time.	During school events 75% of snacks and meals are healthy and nutritious as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> .	During school events, 100% of snacks and meals are healthy and nutritious as recommended in Canada's Food Guide.
	School fundraising events always include unhealthy food choices such as candy and chocolate bars.	School fundraising events often include unhealthy food choices such as candy and chocolate bars.	School fundraising events rarely include unhealthy food choices such as candy and chocolate bars.	Chool fundraising events never include unhealthy food choices such as candy or chocolate bars; fundraising items for sale are either a healthy food option such as oranges or are not a food item at all.
	Some students are isolated and eat meals alone.	Students are encouraged to sit with their peers and to include others as part of a social group. Few students are isolated.	Efforts are made by supervisors and students to include everyone in the social activities at meal times. Few to no students are isolated.	Inclusive caring and respectful practices are common; no students are isolated.
Supportive Social				During school events, teachers, administrators, caregivers and communities support and model healthy food choices as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> .
Environment	The school does not have a shared vision of what it means to be a school that values healthy body images. ( <i>Negative behaviours in relation to another's appearance may occur</i> ).	<ul> <li>Staff model body satisfaction and take care to avoid transferring personal prejudices about body shape.</li> <li>Positive language about food and avoidance of such terms as "junk" and "bad" foods are encouraged.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Teachers participate in training regarding body image.</li> <li>The school promotes the experience of activity and movement for enjoyment.</li> </ul>	The school coordinates all body image programs and speakers with the provincial curriculum.

Element	Awareness	In Development	Developed	Implemented
	Students do not have any or enough breakfast, lunch or snack.	Students are not eating foods that are considered nutritious as recommended in <i>Canada's Food</i> <i>Guide</i> .	Students are eating healthy nutritious meals and snacks as recommended in Canada's Food Guide.	Students are eating healthy nutritious meals and snacks as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> , and are involved in the selection and preparation of food.
Community Engagement	Limited amounts of food are available in the school.	There is access to food for students who require it, but much of the food is not nutritious.	There is access to healthy nutritious foods at school.	Healthy nutritious foods are available at school and students are involved in the selection and preparation of food.
and Partnerships	Crhool staff provide information to families regarding healthy eating	The school offers programs regarding healthy eating and food security to selected families.	All families and community members are welcome to participate in school programs regarding healthy eating and food security.	A community of caregivers, school staff, students and local business partners advocate and implement strategies for addressing food security. Programs such as community kitchens, the "Good Food Box" community
				gargens and the gevelopment of food charters are examples of such partnerships.

# **Appendix D**

#### **Healthy School Food Policy and Guidelines Checklist**

The following checklist is a tool, which may be used by school divisions, schools and School Community Councils, along with their stakeholders in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and guidelines for healthy school foods. It can also be a mechanism to track progress over time.

Nutrition Policy Checklist	Not Evident	Emerging/ Developing	Evident	Exemplary
The school division has a policy that follows the provincial guidelines outlined in the document <i>Nourishing Minds: Towards Comprehensive</i> <i>School Community Health, Nutrition Policy in Saskatchewan Schools.</i>				
Stakeholders at the division level are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of the policy.				
Schools engage a broad array of stakeholders (including students) in the development, implementation and evaluation of school level administrative procedures that aligns with the school division nutrition policy.				
High-Quality Teaching and Learning				
Stakeholders including school division, board of education, school staff, parents, students and School Community Councils have opportunities to learn about healthy eating.				
Provincial health education curricula are implemented and appropriate instructional strategies and healthy eating resources are used.				
School staff promote the school nutrition policy by planning and modeling healthy food choices and behaviours.				
Healthy foods are defined and understood. All foods in the school meet the <i>Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Safety Guidelines</i> . Foods offered and served in schools are consistent with the learning outcomes of the health education curriculum.				
Healthy Physical Environment Students and staff wash their hands before and after eating.				
Every student has access to a chair and desk/table top to eat his or her meal comfortably.				
Regular mealtimes and snack times meet the needs of students. At least 20 minutes of eating time (once seated) is recommended for lunch.				
Lunchroom supervisors are provided with on-going support and training regarding effective practices in supervision and maintaining a respectful, safe and caring environment.				

Nutrition Policy Checklist	Not Evident	Emerging/ Developing	Evident	Exemplary
All foods served in conjunction with school or classroom events and activities (including field trips) meet the <i>Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines</i> .				
Breakfast/lunch/snack programs follow the <i>Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines</i> .				
School fundraising initiatives include only foods that that meet the <i>Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Food Safety Guidelines</i> or non-food items.				
Staff and volunteers involved in food provision receive regular nutrition and food safety training.				
Healthy foods are reasonably priced and readily available in the school (e.g. cafeteria, canteen and servery).				
Foods provided by vendors and caterers meet the criteria in <i>Healthy Foods for My School</i> .				
If rewards or treats are offered, only nutritious foods or non-food items are used.				
Food waste and disposable packaging are minimized.				
Supportive Social Environment				
Inclusive, caring and respectful practices are common; no students are isolated.				
During school events, teachers, administrators, caregivers and communities support and model healthy food choices as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> .				
The school coordinates all body image programs and speakers with the provincial curriculum.				
Community Engagement and Partnerships				
Students eat nutritious meals and snacks as recommended in <i>Canada's Food Guide</i> , and are involved in the selection and preparation of food.				
School meal programs and/or emergency food are available to ensure that all students have access to nutritious food in school.				
A community of caregivers, school staff, students and/or local business partners advocate and implement strategies for addressing food security. Examples include community kitchens, the "Good Food Box" and community gardens. Local foods are purchased as often as possible.				

(Adapted from the Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan)

# **Appendix E**

#### **Sample: School Nutrition Policy**

#### **NUTRITION IN SCHOOLS**

The Board of Education is committed to promoting, offering and role modeling healthy nutritious foods in its schools. Well-nourished students are more likely to achieve their academic potential, physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Schools share the responsibility with the home and community to educate and provide healthy and nutritious foods. The Board of Education advises all schools to provide well-balanced nutritious foods when food is offered to students.

#### PROCEDURES

#### <u>General</u>

- a. The choice of foods offered, sold and served in our schools, and at any school approved or hosted event shall adhere to the guidelines as outlined in *Nourishing Minds: Towards Comprehensive School Community Health, Nutrition Policy Development in Saskatchewan Schools.*
- b. Nutritious foods will be reasonably priced and appropriately promoted and advertised.
- c. Schools will adhere to Public Health Food Safety Standards.
- d. A school division Nutrition Committee, including a parent and student, school administrator, teacher and superintendent, shall be established to provide guidance and annual review regarding the nutritional offerings and procedures in Ministry of Education curriculum.
- e. Each school principal and School Community Council will develop procedures to comply with this policy and inform their staff and families annually.
- f. The guidelines apply to the following areas: Canteens/Concessions/Cafeteria Vending machines
  Fund-raising
  Classroom treats and rewards
  Celebrations
  Field trips
  Sporting events
  Professional Development
  Staff Meetings
  Emergency Food Programs
  - Vendors
  - Catering
- g. Catering companies and outside vendors are notified of, and adhere to the nutrition policy.

#### Prairie South School Division (Adapted)

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#### **Links to Tools**

Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan, Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Dairy farmers of Saskatchewan; (2007). Healthy Foods in Schools: Making Healthy Choices the Easy Choices Toolkit (for more information, contact a Public Health Nutritionist in your Regional Health authority)

Government of Saskatchewan, Ministry of Health, (2008). *Healthy Foods for My School* (<u>http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/healthy-foods-for-my-school</u>), developed in partnership with Public Health Nutritionists in Regional Health authorities.

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#### Other Resources (grants, funding opportunities, etc.)

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Ministry of Education, Regional and Integrated Services Branch, Child Nutrition and Development Program (CNDP) School and Community Nutrition Grants Program. Contact Terry Myers, Executive Director (terry. myers@gov.sk.ca) 4th Floor, 2220 College Avenue, Regina S4P 4V9 Telephone: 306-787-5679

Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger http://www.reachinregina.ca/

Child Hunger and Education Program, Saskatoon http://www.chep.org/

Food Security and Food Charters: What is a food charters? Benefits? Who is involved? <u>www.foodsecuresaskatchewan.ca</u>

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