

Purpose/Background

Healthy eating is an integral part of growth and development. An increasing amount of research draws connections between student health and potential for learning. Additionally, children learn from role models. Therefore, the Division endeavours to create supportive school environments for good nutrition and lifelong well-being by encouraging healthy eating for all students and staff.

The development of healthy eating habits is achieved through education in a health-promoting environment. Division schools shall implement a coordinated comprehensive food and nutrition plan that encourages all students and staff to develop good eating habits by promoting the consumption of nutritious and dentally acceptable foods, and controlling the sale and use of non-nutritious foods.

Procedures

1. Each Principal shall:
 - 1.1 Utilize and implement the RVS Approach to Healthy Eating.
 - 1.2 Develop school guidelines and procedures pertaining to food allergies and with reference to Administrative Procedure 316, Medication/Personal Care.
 - 1.3 Develop school guidelines and procedures pertaining to food handling for all School Food Activities as referenced by [Alberta Health regulations](#).
 - 1.4 Monitor the implementation and maintenance of this nutrition Administrative Procedure on an annual basis.
 - 1.5 Ensure staff have Alberta Food Safety training.
 - 1.6 Ensure school facility has Alberta Health and Safety permit.
2. Healthy Eating Guidelines
 - 2.1 The Appendix is to serve as a guideline only, as the lists are not comprehensive or exhaustive. Food and beverage choices not on the list are to be considered in the spirit of these guidelines.
3. Vending Machines
 - 3.1 All beverage vending machines in all Division schools will have water and may have products in the form of one hundred percent (100%) unsweetened juice and/or vegetable juices and/or milk.
 - 3.2 All food product vending machines in all Division schools will have product chosen from the “Serve Most Often” list and product chosen from the “Serve Sometimes” list.
4. Principals that choose to operate a canteen will always offer items from the “Serve Most Often” list and may offer foods from the “Serve Sometimes” list, and limit the sale of foods from the “Serve Least Often” category.

5. Principals that choose to operate a cafeteria shall incorporate the principles outlined in the Alberta Nutrition Guideline for Children and Youth (2008) and the RVS Approach to Healthy Eating.
6. All schools in the Division will be limited to only one (1) major food-related fundraising activity, which may include items from the “Serve Least Often” list. All other food-related fundraising activities will only include items from the “Serve Most Often” and “Serve Sometimes” lists.
7. All Division schools are encouraged to limit the use of unhealthy food as rewards and incentives.
8. All Division school special events (sports events, class parties, field trips, etc.) will incorporate the principles outlined in the [Alberta Nutrition Guideline for Children and Youth](#).
9. The beverages consumed by students during instructional time will be water or other healthy choices as allowed by individual school procedures.
10. Division staff is encouraged to model healthy food and beverage choices during instructional time.
11. This Administrative Procedure does not impact on lunches, snacks, etc. that students or staff members bring from home.

Reference:

- Section 33, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act
- Public Health Act Food Handling Regulations, 2006
- Alberta Health and Wellness Food Retail and Food Services Code
- Alberta Nutrition Guideline for Children and Youth

Appendix A – ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS APPROACH TO HEALTHY EATING

Goal

Rocky View Schools supports success in students by promoting healthy eating environments in all schools and by coordinating the efforts of people and resources within schools and across the division.

Commitment

Rocky View Schools recognizes that healthy eating is an important part of growth and development and contributes to student learning.

School environments are unique and in the best position to determine what activities are effective in encouraging healthy eating behaviours in the lives of students. The division is committed to supporting schools to promote equity both within the school environment and across the school division.

Philosophy

Rocky View Schools believes that Healthy Eating Guidelines are most effective when they:

- Can be maintained from year to year.
- Promote healthy food and beverages and limit the availability of less healthy food and beverages.
- Acknowledge that all foods can be enjoyed occasionally when healthy eating and active living are a regular part of life.
- Encourage healthy attitudes towards food.
- Recognize the role food plays in students' emotional, social and physical development.
- Provide the school community with information and education around making healthier food and drink choices.
- Encourage students to use self-assessment strategies, modelling and discussion to learn healthy eating behaviours.
- Encourage students to critically think about the impact of their food choices on their current and long- term health.
- Recognize that students learn from role models at home, at school and in the community.
- Encourage the school community to promote lifestyles that support healthy eating.
- Recognize the diversity of students, as related to religion, culture, stages of growth and development, activity levels and food allergies/intolerances.
- Provide messaging and nutrition education around portion sizes related to growth, development, and activity level.
- Promote accessibility, competitive pricing, and the visible display of healthy choices.
- Recognize the importance of value for money and a reasonable product/profit ratio when selling food.

Foundational Principles

Rocky View Schools agrees to implement Healthy Eating Guidelines that:

- Build on current success and strive for positive change.
- Support healthy school food environments.
- Ensure the use of best practices that are evidence based.
- Include collaboration with key stakeholders, including parents, community partners, Alberta Health Services, and food service providers.
- Work with schools to identify school-specific needs and appropriate actions.
- Enhance access to safe and nutritious foods; comply with safe food regulations and standards; and use locally grown food and environmentally friendly packaging where feasible.
- Facilitate nutrition education in the school community.

To successfully implement Healthy Eating Guidelines, schools are encouraged to:

- Prepare by gaining support from key stakeholders, identifying a health champion, and forming a collaborative team
- Create a shared vision of the ideal healthy school food environment.
- Assess the school environment using the *Joint Consortium for School Health*
- Develop an action plan focusing on at least one of the priority areas of the school food environment outlined in the *Strategies to Implement Healthy Eating Guidelines* document.
- Work with businesses, organizations, parent-run and volunteer food service providers to offer healthy food items as outlined in the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth.
- Use the Alberta Health Services implementation resources available on their [website](#).
- Reflect, evaluate and celebrate the implementation of healthy eating initiatives.
- For additional support, schools may contact the RVS Community Partner Program Coordinator.

Healthy Eating Standards

The Healthy Eating Standards, outlined in **Tables 1-3**, will guide school communities in making informed choices about the food and beverages provided within the school environment and are based on the recommendations in Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth, and Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.

Table 1. Food Rating System

Choose Most Often (Sell Most Often)	Choose Sometimes (Sell Sometimes)	Choose Least Often (Do not Sell)
These foods have good or excellent nutritional value. The products in this category are lower in unhealthy fat and added sugar, and higher in vitamins, minerals and/or fibre. These foods should be consumed daily in appropriate amounts and portion sizes, based on age category.	These foods have moderate amounts of nutrients, but are higher in sugar, sodium and/or fat. These foods should be consumed in moderation (about 2-3 times per week). Eating too many foods from this category may displace the consumption of more nutrient rich foods.	These foods provide little nutrient value and are high in fat, sugar or salt and low in vitamins and minerals. To make healthy choices the easy choice, these items are not recommended and should be offered rarely and in small portions. These foods are not part of the four food groups in Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.

Table 2. Recommendations for School Level Standards

	Choose Most Often (Sell Most Often)	Choose Sometimes (Sell Sometimes)	Choose Least Often (Do Not Sell)
Elementary School	100%	0%	0%
Junior High School	60%	40%	0%
High School	50%	50%	0%

Table 3. Recommendations for the Food and Beverages that can be Served and Sold in Schools

Priority Area	Recommendations
1. Internal School Run Food Programs (including canteens, kiosks, breakfast or lunch programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will strive towards providing 100% of foods and beverages from the <i>Choose Most Often</i> and/or <i>Choose Sometimes</i> categories. • Use <i>Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide</i> to ensure meals contain foods from at least three of the four food groups and snacks contain foods from two food groups. • Schools will create their own implementation plan, respecting individual school environments. (see <i>Strategies to Implement the Healthy Eating Guidelines</i> document)

<p>2. Contracted Food Service Providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Food Service Contracts will align with the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth. • Choices from the Choose Most Often and/or Choose Sometimes categories will be given preferred placement in cafeterias, kiosks and canteens to maximize visibility. These items should be placed at eye level or in prominent display cases as each school environment allows. • Information regarding contracts for cafeteria services (Chartwells), snack vending (Mr. Vend-It) and beverages (Coca-Cola) can be found by contacting Supply Management
<p>3. Fundraising Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive towards non-food fundraisers • If a food-based fundraiser is held, use foods from the Choose Most
<p>5. Rewards in the Classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive towards offering non-food items for rewards • If food rewards are used, offer foods and beverages from the Choose
<p>6. Special Lunch Days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure balanced lunches by providing at least 3 of the 4 food groups from Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide, using foods from the Choose Most Often and/or Choose Sometimes categories.
<p>7. Special Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When more than one food choice is offered, balance food choices with a variety of foods from the 4 food groups and limit foods from the Choose Least Often category. • If permitted, offer only small portion sizes of Choose Least Often items.

Resources:

- Alberta Government. Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth. (2012)
- Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide (2011)
- Joint Consortium for School Health. Healthy School Planner
- Alberta Health Services. Comprehensive School Health
- Alberta Health Services. School Nutrition
- Rocky View Schools. Strategies to Implement Healthy Eating Guidelines
- Rocky View Schools. Healthy Eating Initiative

Appendix B – STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES

Strategies to Implement Healthy Eating Guidelines

The Comprehensive School Health approach can be used to successfully implement Healthy Eating Guidelines. The Comprehensive School Health approach outlines a cyclical process for building healthy school communities by following these steps; prepare, create a shared vision, determine the priority issues, develop an action plan, implement and monitor, and reflect, evaluate and celebrate. The emphasis is on creating an environment to support student well-being through consultation, collaboration and student engagement. Continuous implementation of healthy eating guidelines can be accomplished by establishing a clear vision and goals, then creating an action and evaluation plan that is reviewed on an annual basis. Visit the Alberta Health Services website for more information on the Comprehensive School Health Approach.

Examples of school food environments and strategies to begin the process of change are included in the table below.

Priority Area	Examples	Strategies for Change
<p>1. Food Served and Sold in School (cafeteria, kiosk, canteen, breakfast, lunch and snack programs) (continued)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible have ingredient information available for foods provided and sold. • Ensure that staff is able to recognize and be sensitive to hunger due to inadequate access to food and have healthy foods discretely available to any student if they come to school without breakfast or lunch. • Explore the resources available to address inadequate access to food such as Breakfast for Learning, the local food bank & COBS. • When implementing community food programs, strive to incorporate; universal access and participation, school and community involvement, healthy food and menu planning, safety, and evaluation. • Respect diversity and individual needs by being sensitive and inclusive to faiths/cultures, special dietary needs etc.

<p>2. Beverages Served and Sold in School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk, flavoured milk, soymilk, water and 100% juice. • Rocky View Schools has an exclusive beverage contract with Coca-Cola. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve students or school action groups where possible in decisions about the school food environment to increase student support. • Make healthy choices more visible (eye level); use attractive displays and presentations. • Offer healthy beverages with meal combos. • Label healthy foods to raise awareness of healthier choices by using a healthy choice sticker or symbol or create or a promotion campaign (posters, vending headers and postcards.) • Sports drinks are considered a Choose Least Often beverage, except during vigorous and lengthy sporting events. Eliminate the sale of all sports drinks except when provided by the school’s coach to student athletes participating in sports programs involving vigorous activity of more than one hour in duration. • Energy drinks will not be sold or offered in any school environment • Natural health products and beverages with herbal ingredients will not be sold because the safety, effectiveness and related health claims of many of these ingredients is currently unknown (particularly among children and youth).
<p>3. Snacks Sold in Vending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked chips, multigrain chips, pretzels, granola bars, trail mix, sunflower seeds, fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve students or school action groups where possible in decisions about the school food environment to

Priority Area	Examples	Strategies for Change
<p>3. Snacks Sold in Vending Machines (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a refrigerated machine is available then items like packaged sandwiches, subs, wraps, salads, yogurt, fruit, and veggies and dip can be sold. • Rocky View Schools has an exclusive vending machine contract with Mr. Vend-It. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together with the vendor to select products using the criteria in the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth. Vendors are often the first to hear of new products. • Label healthy foods to raise awareness of healthier choices by using a healthy choice sticker or symbol • Offer taste testing of new products to increase student support. • Create or use an existing promotion campaign (posters, vending headers and postcards.) • Price healthy choices competitively or lower if competing with unhealthy choices.
<p>4. Fundraising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-food items: activity challenges, intramural challenges, used book and toy sales, cookbooks, 'service' auctions, school logo items, potted plants/herbs • Food: fresh fruit or vegetables, pasta, nuts, seasoning spices, popcorn, fruit or veggie grams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact local businesses for support in fundraising initiatives. • Initiate conversation at the School Council level around the cost to students and families for the purchase of unhealthy snacks at school • and the resulting profit shares. Consider alternatives to collecting funds for school-based initiatives.

<p>5. Rewards in the Classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Food Items: School supplies, dollar store items, novelty pens, pencils, paperback books, school logo items, gift certificates, or points or school ‘bucks’ to cash in for larger item at end of year or semester. • Privileges: Field trips, class outside or alternative class settings • Recognition: Certificates of accomplishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a school policy of ‘no food rewards in the classroom • Partner with local businesses to offer non-food items for rewards. • Discuss the consequences of food rewards in the classroom such as eating when not hungry and promoting a preference for sweet treats over healthier foods. Discuss how this can discourage positive attitudes towards healthy eating habits and be contradictory to what is taught in the classroom.
<p>6. Special Lunch Days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub sandwiches, wraps, pitas using: whole grains, 4” or 6” portion size, lots of vegetables, lean meats, lower fat cheese and lower fat mayonnaise • Pizza using: whole wheat crust, tomato sauce, lower fat cheese, leaner meats, more vegetables, and a moderate portion size such as 1/6 of a 14” pizza • Hamburgers using: whole grain buns, lean meat or vegetarian burger, pre-portioned condiments and lower fat cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the year determine the frequency of items offered for special lunch days. For example, if only hot dogs and pizza are offered, start by offering them less often and offering other healthy options as well. • Partner with local businesses to offer healthy special lunch day options. • Use seasonal foods when available

Priority Area	Examples	Strategies for Change
<p>6. Special Lunch Days (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta using: whole grain pasta, low sodium tomato sauce, milk instead of cream in white sauce, and added vegetables • Hot soup or chili and a whole wheat bun • Breakfasts: breakfast burritos, whole grain muffins and smoothies made with yogurt in small portion sizes • Ethnic foods such as sushi, samosas, and salad rolls • Snacks: smoothies, yogurt parfaits, popcorn, fruit cones 	
<p>7. Special Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For examples see ‘Special Lunch Days’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a whole school approach to defining what a special event is and determining the foods and beverages offered. For example, consider the frequency of all opportunities where food is sold or offered to students at school. When special lunch days and special events take place at • least once a week, consider the impact that changes to food choices will have on the students. • Consider consistent healthy messaging for events that involve physical activity such as track meets, tournaments, Terry Fox Run, etc. Make healthy food choices available to support physical activity.

8. Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider various elements of a pleasant dining experience (time, space and environment).• Consider ‘recess before lunch’ for elementary schools. There is evidence that students eat more and are better prepared for afternoon classes when they play before eating. See the ‘Reverse Lunch Toolkit’• Encourage staff to role model healthy eating behaviours.• Ensure that lunch room supervisors are trained to support children with food based allergies and inadequate access to food.• Partner with a local community health centre, dietitian or public health nurse to educate staff,/students,/and parents about healthy eating including the hunger/satiety cycle, healthy snacking, portion sizes related to growth, development and activity level etc.
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