

Texas Public School Nutrition Policy

Implementation of the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy

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Texas Public School Nutrition Policy

In 2004, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) implemented the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy (TPSNP) as a result of collaboration with parents, school administrators, school food service, nutritionists, health professionals and food industry representatives.

Texas Public School Nutrition Policy

The policy guidelines created a new school of thought for schools by enhancing the nutrition standards for all foods served in Texas schools, including school meals, a la carte items, snack bars, vending machines, school stores and fundraising.

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Policy standards emphasize:

- Eliminating deep-fat frying as a method of on-site preparation
- Reducing the frequency of high-fat items that are served and reducing the fat content in school meal items
- Requiring that low fat or skim milk be offered at all points where milk is served
- Requiring fruits and vegetables, fresh whenever possible, to be offered daily on all points of service
- Food items must not contain more than 23 grams of fat with an exception of one individual food item per week. No food item can exceed 28 grams of fat at any time.
- Portion and nutrient restrictions apply to food item categories such as chips, cookies/cereal bars, bakery items and beverages other than milk.

Implementation 2006-2010

Texas Public School Nutrition Policy follows a six-year implementation schedule with restrictions increasing for:

- FMNV
- Competitive Foods
- Fat
- Chips
- Cookies/Bakery Items
- Beverages Other Than Milk

TPSNP: Elementary Schools

Key Items 2004-2007

- Foods of minimal nutritional value, including all types of candy and soda, are not allowed until after the end of the last school period.
- Competitive foods are also not allowed until after the end of the last school period.
- May only provide healthy beverages, limited to unflavored water, milk and 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice.

TPSNP: Middle/Jr. High Schools

Key Items Incorporated 2007-08

- Foods of minimal nutritional value, including all types of candy and soda, are not allowed until after the end of the last school period.
- Competitive foods are not allowed from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after all meal periods during the school day.

Key Items 2008-09

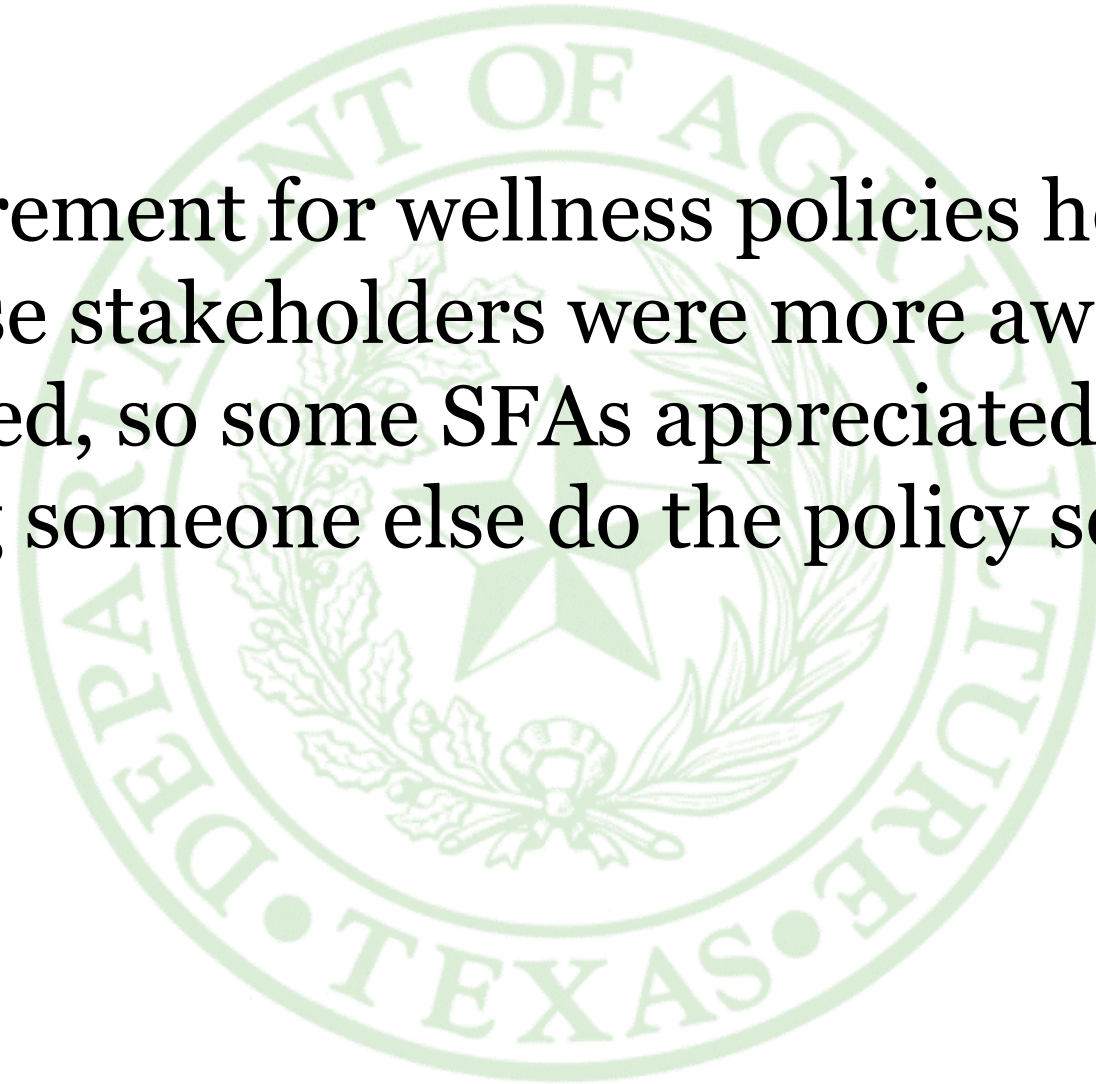
- Foods of minimal nutritional value are not allowed to be provided in areas where reimbursable meals are served and/or consumed.
- No more than 15% of beverages in vending machines or any other point of service should be sugared, carbonated beverages. Sugared, carbonated beverages may not be sold in containers larger than 12 ounces.
- All fryers (all grade levels) must now be removed or not in use.

Feedback has included concerns about:

- Removing fryers
- Utility cost
- Remodeling costs & space
- Time lost with slower cooking methods
- Lost revenue in a la carte and vending

Feedback

Requirement for wellness policies helped because stakeholders were more aware of the need, so some SFAs appreciated having someone else do the policy setting.



Feedback

Food science changes so fast that it's hard for policy to keep up.

For example, carbonation: New products available today may be healthier than when the policy was set.

Feedback

- Requests for documents outlining the responsibilities and contributions expected of teachers and parents.
- Suggestions to involve parents and administrators to enhance their buy-in.

TPSNP: Evaluation

- Sam Houston State University is conducting an ongoing study to see how TPSNP is affecting SMI nutritional content of school meals.
- Compares the nutritional analyses of 160 elementary school lunches with pre-policy SMI evaluations (1998-2003) to the post-policy nutritional analyses.

TPSNP: Evaluation

For 2007-08, the study found:

- Calories **down** (-3%)
- Total fat **down** (-16%)
- Saturated fat **down** (-20%)
- Protein **down** (-3%)
- Vitamin A **up** (+13%)
- Vitamin C **up** (+4%)

TPSNP: Evaluation

The most significant changes were seen in the areas most affected by the TPSNP:

- Reducing total fat and saturated fat
- Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables (good sources of vitamins A and C)

TPSNP: Evaluation

Cholesterol, fiber, carbohydrate and sodium, are also analyzed and reviewed in the study, which found:

- Cholesterol **down** (-9%)
- Fiber fat **down** (-11%)
- Carbohydrate **up** (+4%)
- Sodium **up** (+6%)

TPSNP: Lessons Learned

If we were starting again, we would make sure to:

- define timelines and implementation items at the start
- communicate, communicate and communicate
- involve stakeholders in all aspects
- involve schools in review of the policy, never assume everyone understands what is being presented without review and feedback

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Questions?

Texas Department of Agriculture

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