

Frequently Asked Questions about Food and Nutrition Policy: **Revised July 2013**

Please view the Lester B. Pearson School Board Food & Nutrition Policy on the LBPSB website at: <http://nutrition.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

1. We are thinking of starting a lunch program (hot or cold) in our school, how do we pick a catering company?

On February 19th, 2007, the school board went to tender to engage a food service provider for all schools, centres and the head office. The contract was awarded to Chartwells, of Compass Group Quebec, as the sole food service provider for the Lester B. Pearson School Board until 2015.

2. Who sets the prices for food sold in the School Board?

The Department of Food Service & Nutrition determines fair prices, taking into account 15 different variables including consumer and market prices, gas increases and weather conditions affecting fresh fruit and vegetables.

Each year, the Council of Commissioners approves the pricing of the cafeteria foods, including the price of Caf-Mobile lunches, by resolution. This occurs after the pricing has been researched independently and reviewed by the Executive Committee. The current Maximum Selling Price List is available at: <http://nutrition.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

3. Why are the meals less expensive in the Youth sector than in the Adult centres?

According to Provincial law, the food in the youth sector is not subject to Quebec Sales Tax. Food served in the adult centres is taxed at the current GST + PST percentages.

4. How is the School Board educating students about good nutrition to the students and supporting teachers in the classroom?

The Food & Nutrition Policy is a baseline for nutrition education. All cafeteria and Caf-Mobile meals offered in LBPSB schools are concrete examples of well-balanced nutritious meals and are in themselves an educational tool.

In addition, School Board dietitians provide nutrition education through many aspects of student life in both the elementary and secondary schools. For example: introducing new foods in the cafeteria, informative posters and newsletters, integrated nutrition programs, lesson plans, resources, web-links, book loans, teaching kits and support for the teachers through school based nutrition events and curriculum modules. Teachers will find this material on our portal.

In addition, the Classroom Nutrition Education Support (CNES) is a program that provides support (financial, material, and reimbursement for food purchase) to elementary school teachers who initiate nutrition education projects for their students during the school year.

5. How does the new Food & Nutrition Policy and MELS affect our fundraising programs and special events?

Our Food & Nutrition Policy is based on Canada's Food Guide and MELS Policy on Healthy Eating and Active Living. MELS policy mandates that foods of good nutritional value be provided to our students in any school/centre initiative which includes special events and fundraising. Therefore, we encourage schools and centres to bear in mind Lester B. Pearson's commitment to healthy eating when choosing a food-related fundraising activity. However, schools and centres determine their own fundraising activities.

Some schools and centres have chosen chocolate products as fundraisers in the past. If chocolate is being considered, MELS states the following: "The sale of chocolate may be permitted if the first ingredient is not sugar. A general rule would be chocolate containing more than 70% cocoa, which has less sugar than milk chocolate or white chocolate."

6. How often can we have food from outside sources?

Two times per month.

A school may choose a company other than the contracted Food Service provider for fundraising or a special event as long as the food selections consider the LBPSB Food & Nutrition Policy. For example, if the school is considering a sandwich company for a fundraiser, we recommend asking for healthier selections such as 85% lean meats, whole wheat bread products, light salad dressing (ie. low in fat), 100% pure fruit juice or milk as the beverage and either a milk pudding or fruit cup for dessert. School administrators may contact our department for easy suggestions with this topic.

7. Will taking away all the "fun" food encourage the high school students to go outside?

"Fun" foods include many healthy foods. High school students define "fun" foods as those that are cool, taste good, are inexpensive and are easy to eat on the go. LBPSB's priority is to provide a variety of different foods that are "teen friendly", and fall into the "fun" category, while giving options through healthy choices.

8. How will the new Food & Nutrition Policy reflect cultural diversity?

The cafeteria menu will take into account the diversity of the school population and try to offer foods that reflect this. New foods will be introduced with free samples in the cafeterias and student involvement will be encouraged through favourite cultural recipes.

9. How can we ask a generous benefactor to give us healthier food in their donations; and if food is donated, and does not fit in the nutrition policy, what do we do?

In many instances, the organization giving the donation may not have knowledge about alternative food selections. Should you need help with guidelines or recommendations for this sensitive topic, please contact our department.

10. We have some children who arrive at school with no lunch and probably have not had breakfast, what can we do?

It is important that all adults (educators and caregivers) recognize the signs of a student that is hungry; such as behavior changes, tiredness, sore stomach, headaches, difficulty staying on task, change in academic performance etc., and report their concerns to their school administrators. There are funds to help out in cases such as these and the school administrators should contact our department.

11. We have an after-school homework program, what can we do to provide a healthy snack?

There are several school based budgets (depending on the school) that will cover after-school snack programs. Please contact the Daycare and/or the Food Service and Nutrition Department for more info.

12. . Why are allergies not covered in the Policy?

Due to the numerous variations and complicated nature of allergies, it was determined that the topic of allergies was best served by the Safe School Policy.

13. What does the term “to regulate, as much as possible” stated in section 1.2 mean?

This term implies that regulation is done in order to meet the highest requirement given a specific situation. Given the different sizes of the schools, each situation is handled differently. The “regulating” refers to the nutritional content and frequency with which food is brought in to school on an annual basis other than for individual snacks and lunches. It is important to sensitize all persons (staff, Daycare, monitors, GB reps, parents etc...) about the global effect on student’s health and amount of food coming into the school for classroom and school events. This is compounded in the high schools with each department, sports team, business classes, homeroom and grad trips doing their events, either monthly or annually.

14. Can schools and centres use food as a reward system, offering events such as pizza parties as prizes?

Although food may be used as a motivator on occasion, the aim is to teach moderation, be aware of frequency of events and to encourage wise food choices for a healthy lifestyle.

15. How will schools and centres incorporate nutritious foods as per this Policy during festivities or special occasions?

Every effort should be made to include nutritious foods in end-of-year festivities, in-school celebrations, holidays and other special occasions. This will foster a healthy lifestyle and students may participate in the preparation of menus. Exceptions may occur from time to time and consuming in moderation is the life-style lesson.

16. How will healthy choices be made available for all youth, adults and the students of AVE?

Nutritious foods are available in all LBPSB cafeterias for the youth sector (as described in Addendum E). Adult schools and center cafeterias have a variety of food including healthy choices. Nutritious foods are made available as a choice whenever possible. Cafeterias fulfill the majority of this mandate by providing healthy alternatives on a regular basis.

17. How does the Food & Nutrition Policy apply to fundraising activities?

All school communities and governing boards are asked to consider healthy alternatives when fundraising, keeping in mind the Food and Nutrition Policy. Moderation again plays a key factor in teaching the negotiation of the real world of food.