

Healthy School Store

Overview

Apples, whole grain crackers, pencils, oh my! Does your school have a school store that sells these items? If so, does it offer healthy items? A school store that sells healthy options helps reinforce good nutrition and gives students the opportunity to practice making healthy food choices. School stores can also teach students about managing money and maintaining a business.



If your school participates in the Federal School Meal Program, vending machines that students can access during the school day must provide options that align with the [USDA's Smart Snacks Standards](#).

Take Action

Whether you already have a school store or you are seeking to start one, school stores can support a healthy school environment by reinforcing healthy rewards and healthy fundraising.

If you are starting a school store for the first time:

- Determine a location for your school store. Will you utilize an empty classroom or a “pop-up” in the hallway?
- Determine the days and times of your school store. Establishing a set schedule helps students and staff plan their store trips. For younger students,

work with classroom teachers to schedule monthly class trips to the store.

- Decide on what your school store will use as currency. For younger students, consider setting up a system for “school store bucks” where students can earn money in the classroom that can be cashed in at the school store. For older students, utilize cash to fundraise for health and wellness activities.

Strategies for making your school store healthier:

- Only certain foods and beverages can be sold during the school day. Review the [Smart Snacks Standards](#) to understand what is allowable.
- Survey teachers and students to learn about the kinds of healthy snacks they would like to see sold at the school store.
- Negotiate with local grocery stores and food vendors to see if they can provide healthy foods to your school at a reduced cost.
- Educate school staff and students about healthy choices through posters, school news articles and the school announcements.
- Label food products with facts about why they are a healthy choice.
- Institute a “Healthy Snack of the Month” campaign, and promote the product among students and staff. Place a sticker on the bottom of one of the highlighted snack products and offer a healthy prize to the lucky recipient.
- [Host a taste test](#) to promote new snack options.
- Make sure your school store serves non-food items as well! Consider school supplies, spirit wear, and trendy toys.

Tips



Close the store during breakfast and lunch to encourage students to eat school meals.



To promote and incentivize healthy options, hand out school store coupons to classroom teachers and at school functions.



Be a guinea pig: Let food vendors know that your school would be happy to test out new healthy products (often times they'll send



Keep you school store relevant by stocking it according to holidays and seasons. For example, sell carnations around Valentine's

you samples for tree!).

Day.



Recruit a parent volunteer to assist in managing the school store. Activities may include tracking inventory, placing new orders, reaching out to local vendors who would be interested in donating items to the school, and helping to manage the store schedule.

Additional Resources

[Tools for Schools: Focusing on Smart Snacks \(United States Department of Agriculture\)](#)

[Smart Snack Calculator \(Alliance for a Healthier Generation\)](#)

[Approved Smart Snacks \(Alliance for a Healthier Generation\)](#)

[Healthy School Store Product List \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

[Healthy Fundraisers Tip Sheet \(ENGLISH\) \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

[Healthy Fundraisers Tip Sheet \(SPANISH\) \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

[Food Ideas Tip Sheet \(ENGLISH\) \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

[Food Ideas Tip Sheet \(SPANISH\) \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

Related Activities

Healthy Vending

Whether the vending machine is available to students or just staff, providing healthy vending options is key to your school's success in creating a healthier environment.

Healthy Fundraising

Healthy fundraising is a public demonstration of your school's commitment to promoting healthy, consistent behaviors among students, families, and communities at large while helping your school meet financial needs.

Pricing Strategies to Encourage Healthy Eating

Offering healthy foods for sale at school is sometimes not enough to get students to eat better. Pricing healthier options so they are cheaper than their less healthy counterparts is one way to do this.

Smart Snacks Standards

Is your school smart snack savvy? The "Smart Snacks in School" rule set standards for all foods and beverages sold in schools that participate in the national school meal program.