

Under the SFUSD Wellness Policy, why are fundraising food sales not allowed on campus during the school day?

This is a brief overview. For complete information, go to www.sfusdfood.org

Here's a summary of the rule, which has been in effect since the 2003-04 school year:

At all schools, K-12, teachers, staff, parents, and students may not sell any food or beverage at all during the school day – this includes bake sales, student stores, and classroom food sales. The only exceptions are for the four days per year when high school students are allowed to sell food.

Here are the reasons:

First, the SFUSD Wellness Policy's "No Empty Calories" focus limits foods sold on campus during the day to approved nutritious items. That is because of our national obesity epidemic, which is devastating the health of today's generation of youth, and a commitment to putting young people's health ahead of money. State laws that took effect July 1, 2007, also put strict limits on junk food sales.

But even if only healthy foods are sold, there's another important reason. The federally subsidized National School Lunch Program provides the "lunch-line" menus at all schools, offering free or reduced-priced lunch to low-income students. Other students pay full (though reasonable) price for those meals. If more students buy those lunches, the income allows the quality of the cuisine to be improved for all students.

"Competitive food" sales at lunchtime drain money from the lunch-line operation, which then reduces the quality of those meals and drives more students to the competitive operations in a downward spiral. When the lunch-line menus drop in quality because kids choose competitive foods instead, those who suffer are the most vulnerable kids – the younger children (since elementary schools don't have competitive sales) and the lowest-income kids, who can't afford the other foods being sold.

So, more kids eating the school lunches mean the school lunches get better. More kids eating the school lunches also enables more cafeteria staff to be hired, speeding up the lines.

Here are some facts about the young people's health:

- ❖ Childhood obesity has tripled since 1970.
- ❖ Rates of asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes and other disorders in children and teens have skyrocketed correspondingly.
- ❖ Health professionals expect the current generation of young people to be the first in modern history to live shorter life spans than their parents' generation, entirely due to obesity and related maladies.
- ❖ Obesity and related health crises are far more severe among African-American, Latino and economically disadvantaged children and teens.