

## **Healthy School Food Timeline**

Congress has acted in a bipartisan manner since 1946 in order to ensure that children across the country are well nourished at school. Members of Congress from both parties have understood that the nutrition needs of our nation's kids are important for national security, a productive workforce, current and future well-being of citizens, and containing health care costs.

Below are some key moments in the bipartisan evolution of healthy school foods:

**1946: President Harry Truman (D)** signs National School Lunch Act in response to concerns by the military after 40 percent of potential World War II recruits were rejected for reasons related to poor nutrition.

**1966: President Lyndon B. Johnson (D)** signs the Child Nutrition Act to establish the Breakfast Program Pilot. The term "Competitive Foods" is coined. Type A meal pattern is adopted, setting basic standards for schools meals.

**1970: Senators Clifford Case (R-NJ), Bob Dole (R-KS), and Hubert Humphrey (D-MN)** introduce a bill to remove unhealthy food from schools by giving USDA authorization to define and regulate competitive foods (food sold outside meals).

**1973-1975: Senator Clifford Case (R-NJ)** introduces bills to restore USDA authority to regulate competitive foods. The bills fail to move; competitive food sales increase in schools.

**1975: President Gerald Ford (R)** signs a bill permanently authorizing the National School Breakfast Program.

**1979: USDA regulations for competitive foods establish the category "foods of minimal nutritional value," which cannot be sold in school cafeterias during mealtimes.**

**1984: President Ronald Reagan (R)** signs budget cuts to school lunch program. Cuts in funding result in proliferation of sale of foods outside the NSLP as a way to provide additional revenue for schools.

**1994: President Bill Clinton (D)** signs Healthy Meals for Americans Act, which establishes the School Meals Initiative, requiring USDA to update meal standards to meet the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

**2002: President George W. Bush (R)** signs the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act establishing the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable (snack) Program pilot.

**2004: President George W. Bush (R)** signs the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, which establishes local wellness policies, requires local districts to address competitive foods and makes the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program permanent.

**2004-2008:** Arkansas, Mississippi, California, New Jersey, Oregon, Kentucky and other states pass policies to improve the nutritional quality of snacks and beverages sold through vending machines and other venues outside the school lunch program.

**2006:** USDA, under **President George W. Bush (R)**, contracts with National Academies' Institute of Medicine to develop recommendations for science-based nutrition updates for the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program.

**2006:** The Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act, a bipartisan bill to update standards for foods sold outside school meals, is introduced.

**2007:** Beverage and snack companies, along with health groups, work on an amendment to the farm bill to get sugary drinks and unhealthy competitive foods out of schools. The amendment fails to come to a vote.

**2009:** The Institute of Medicine, at the request of **President George W. Bush (R)**, issues recommended science-based nutrition guidelines for school lunches and breakfasts.

**2010: President Barack Obama (D)** signs the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, requiring updates to both school meals and foods sold outside the school meal program. The bill passes Congress with bipartisan and broad stakeholder support, including food and beverage companies.

**2012:** The first phase of the updated nutrition standards for the NSLP go into effect. The standards are based on the Institute of Medicine recommendations, adding more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and removing trans fat.

**2013:** 90% of school districts are certified as meeting the new NSLP standards.

**2014 (July):** Smart Snacks guidelines are implemented to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold through vending, school stores, a la carte, and fundraisers (competitive foods). The next phase of school meal standards take effect, which include sodium standards, more whole grains, and more fruit in breakfast.

**2014 (Dec):** Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Cromnibus) is enacted. Includes language to delay the next phase of sodium requirements and provide additional flexibility on enforcement of whole grain standards for struggling schools.

Lawmakers, along with parents, school administrators, health professionals, food service personnel, and advocates, have worked together since the beginning of the programs to promote healthy school foods. In addition to the bipartisan efforts of Congress, this effort has included stakeholders from agriculture, the food and beverage industry, the anti-hunger community, public health, and schools.

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