

Subject: Food and Nutrition Services
 Topics: Sanitation Course Requirement
 Time to Eat Student Meals
 Qualified individual to manage program
 Waivers for inadequate meal space

School Approval Standard:
 306.11(a)-(f)

This is the thirteenth in a series of Technical Advisories issued by the Department to clarify the School Approval Standards.

I. Ed. 306.11 Food and Nutrition Services

- (a) The local school board shall:
 - (1) Require that each school makes a meal available during school hours to every student under its jurisdiction, in accordance with RSA 189:11-a, I-II.
 - (2) Provide a qualified individual, such as, but not limited to, a school nutrition/food service director, to oversee the operation of school meals, to maintain proper resources that meet state and federal regulations, and maintain state health requirements for each school site within the district: and
 - (3) Require that each newly-constructed school or renovated kitchen or cafeteria provide space for the preparation and consumption of meals in compliance with Ed. 321.12(d)
- (b) All food service employees shall, within their first year of employment, obtain a certificate of completion of an approved sanitation course.
- (c) If a school nutrition/food service director is employed, each food service director shall whenever feasible, obtain certification or credentials from an approved program, including but not limited to School Nutrition Association (SNA) certification, within the first 5 years of employment.
- (d) Students shall be provided with an adequate time to consume meals in each elementary school in accordance with federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).
- (e) Students shall be provided with an adequate time to consume meals in each middle and high school in accordance with the federal Child Nutrition and WIC reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).
- (f) If a waiver is granted pursuant to (a)(1) above due to inadequate space, the school district shall make provisions in the next school physical plant expansion to house a food service preparation and consumption area that is in compliance with Ed 321.12(d).

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Lyonel B. Tracy

Date Issued:

June 14, 2006

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II. Discussion: (a) (2) & (c)

Provide a qualified individual, such as, but not limited to, a school nutrition/food service director, to oversee the operation of school meals, to maintain proper resources that meet state and federal regulations, and maintain state health requirements for each school site within the district

If a school nutrition/food service director is employed, each food service director shall, whenever feasible, obtain certification or credentials from an approved program, including but not limited to School Nutrition Association (SNA) certification, within the first 5 years of employment.

Qualified Food Service Individuals

To operate a successful federal school nutrition program requires skills that are specific to the food service professional field. To ensure that those who are employed in school food services have the competencies necessary to operate food service successfully, it is recommended that *The Competencies, Knowledge and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Directors or Managers* be utilized as a tool. This tool has been developed by the National Food Service Management Institute as the model for use in developing job specifications, responsibilities and as a comparison tool. The expectation is that each food service director and/or manager will have or be working toward specific food service knowledge and will be able to demonstrate competency skills; will have a well developed job specification and will participate in professional development opportunities to address areas in need of improvement or to gain further expertise within the profession.

According to the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI), qualified employees are the keys to effective Child Nutrition Programs. As a research base, NFSMI used the *Model for Developing Competent Performance* (Dr. Sneed; Family and Consumer Science Director; Kent State University).

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that each district/school employ a food service director, who is properly qualified and certified according to current professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements. It is recommended that School Food Authorities refer to *“Changing the Scene”*, a collaborative effort which includes the NASBE policies regarding professional staff development. Copies beyond the original sent to each school may be obtained by contacting the NFSMI at www.nfsmi.org

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Suggested resources include but are not limited to:

To access the Competencies contact the National Food Service Management Institute at 1-800-321-3054 or www.nfsmi.org/Information/competencies or contact the Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Service at 271-3646.

- III. Discussion: (a)(3) & (f)
Require that each newly-constructed school or renovated kitchen or cafeteria provide space for the preparation and consumption of meals in compliance with Ed. 321.12(d)

If a waiver is granted pursuant to (a)(1) due to inadequate space, the school district shall make provisions the next school physical plant expansion provisions to house a food service preparation and consumption area that is in compliance with Ed 321.12(d).

Food Service Space Accommodations

Ensuring appropriate space for student meals is an integral part of the school environment in that the appropriate space provides the landscape for furthering the nutritional wellbeing of students and staff. Students who are well nourished have a high attendance rate, improved growth and development, arrive ready to learn, and are less at risk for disease. Research further indicates that students who participate in the meals program have fewer behavior disturbances and pay better attention in class than students who do not have a meals program. Through the use of the cafeteria as a learning laboratory, students receive positive, motivating messages about healthy eating.

According to the National Association of State Boards of Education; ***Fit Healthy and Ready to Learn (E-18)***, students and staff shall have adequate space to eat meals in pleasant surroundings.

Waiver requests for providing appropriate space to accommodate meal service should be addressed to Edward Murdough, Bureau of School Approval and Facility Management, phone 271-2037 or emurdough@ed.state.nh.us.

- IV. Discussion: (b)
All food service employees shall, within their first year of employment, obtain a certificate of completion of an approved sanitation course.

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Sanitation Course Requirements

Assuring that those who feed our school children have basic sanitation training is in the best interest of our students' health and safety and assists in ensuring a safe school community. Having staff trained in the industry standards may reduce the potential outbreak of food borne illnesses. Food sanitation practices have developed into a sophisticated science that requires more than basic knowledge. However, having all staff trained in the basics of food handling practices may provide a more alert and prepared staff ready to serve students and adults.

During the first year of employment all new employees must obtain a certificate of completion for an approved sanitation course. To meet the minimum standards, it is NOT required that the course include an examination. Any course that is not on the approved list should be authorized through the Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services to ensure minimum standards are met. It is understood that employees who have more than one year of employment be considered as part of a continuing education plan to update existing certificates.

According to the National Food Service Management Institute, the leading Child Nutrition Program research facility, qualified employees are the keys to effective Child Nutrition Programs. As a research base, NFSMI used the following *Model for Developing Competent Performance* (Dr. Sneed; Family and Consumer Science Director; Kent State University).

- Establishes procedures to effectively ensure high levels of sanitation are maintained in the preparation and service of food.
- Develops and integrates food safety regulations in all phases of the school food service operation.
- Establishes monitoring and corrective action procedures for HACCP system.
- Implements a documentation and verification system to insure all foods produced and consumed in the CNP are free from contamination risks.

To ensure that school staff has access to a variety of sanitation trainings, the Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services will annually provide an approved sanitation program during the summer School Food Authority Training Conference. The Bureau will provide a Train-the-Trainer session no less than once per school year. This will allow Food Service Directors to train their own staff or partner with other School Food Authorities to ensure compliance. Other approved programs and scheduled trainings may be found on the Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services website: www.ed.state.nh.us/nutrition

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Suggested resources include but are not limited to:

- National School Food Service Institute www.nfsmi.org
- School Nutrition Association www.schoolnutrition.org
- American Culinary Federation www.acfchefs.org
- American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org

Contact for training information:

Food Protection Bureau: www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/FOODSANITATION

Cooperative Extension UNH: <http://ceftp.unh.edu/shell/webevent>

National Restaurant Association: <http://www.nraef.org/irc/index.asp>

While the minimum standard does not specifically address the question of how often an employee would need to update training, industry standards suggest that every three to five years would be appropriate.

The responsibility to ensure staff meet the standard requirement is the responsibility of the School Food Authority. The costs, if any, associated with the requirement are allowable Child Nutrition Program costs. There should be an understanding that there will be several training opportunities provided at no cost to the program and these training opportunities will be offered throughout the state. However, paying for a course is at the discretion of the School Food Authority.

Approved courses include, but are not restricted to:

- USDA Serving It Safe
- NRA ServSafe

Questions regarding course approval should be presented to Judy Gosselin, Program Specialist, Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services at 271-3864 or Judy.Gosselin@ed.state.nh.us

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V. Discussion: (d)(e)

Students shall be provided with an adequate time to consume meals in each elementary school in accordance with federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).

Students shall be provided with an adequate time to consume meals in each middle and high school in accordance with the federal Child Nutrition and WIC reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).

Time to Consume Meals

According to the most current research, students need to have enough time to eat a meal, socialize and relax during meal service. USDA "*Changing the Scene*" outlines the research regarding the provision of meal times. The recommended allowance for time to consume a meal is 10 minutes after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch. To further understand the research regarding student time to eat, contact the National Food Service Management Institute at: 1-800-321-3054 or www.nfsmi.org For further information regarding this standard, contact the Bureau at 271-3860.

The standard listed above will be evaluated, assessed and noted as to compliance during the Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services Coordinated School Review, which is the federal/state requirement for School Food Authority Child Nutrition Programs Compliance.

Contact: Elaine VanDyke
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 FAX 271- 1953
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