



Hope Charter School

Legacy Charter High School

NUTRITION GUIDELINES

Updated July 2018

INTRODUCTION

Our goal is to provide an academic environment in which each child will thrive and succeed, regardless of the individual's learning style and academic strengths or weaknesses, thereby enabling each child to have the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.

The main focus of our nutrition and hydration policy is the brain and what allows it to function optimally. We feel these Nutritional Guidelines are an important part of that. These guidelines are meant to aid you in making healthy and acceptable lunch and snack choices for your Hope and/or Legacy student.

Student activities (on or off campus) that are supervised by the school will follow these guidelines. This includes field trips, on-campus fundraisers and on/off-campus dances and parties. Parents participating in these activities are expected to uphold all school policies including the nutritional guidelines.

In order to help all of our students achieve success in the classroom, we ask that you follow these guidelines for breakfast as well.

If you have questions regarding an item's acceptability you can check with your student's teacher or email us at nutrition@hopecharter.org.

NOTEWORTHY REQUIREMENTS

Added Sugar: Do not use food products with more than 4 grams of added sugar per serving.

Sugar Substitutes: Do not use any food products containing artificial sweeteners or sugar substitutes.

Artificial Colors/Flavors: Do not use any food products containing artificial colors or flavors.

Caffeine: Food or drinks that contain caffeine are not permitted for students.

Water: Students are required to have a water bottle daily; no Propel or sparkling or flavored waters, please.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	pg 2
Requirements	pg 3
Table of Contents.....	pg 4
Added Sugar.....	pg 5
Sugar Substitutes and Artificial Sweeteners.....	pg 6
Artificial Colors and Flavors.....	pg 7
Caffeine.....	pg 8
Water.....	pg 8
Breakfast.....	pg 9
Lunch.....	pg 10
Nutrition and Academic Performance.....	pg 11
Lunch and Snack Ideas.....	pg 14
What Is Added Sugar?.....	pg 16

ADDED SUGAR

Requirement: Do not use food products with more than 4 grams of added sugar per serving.

We have determined that by strictly limiting the amount of sugar students consume, classroom behavior improves and learning increases.

If there are more than 4 grams of added sugar per serving, the item is not allowed on campus. Added sugars will be listed in the Ingredients. Items with more than 4 grams of sugar per serving with no added sugar in the Ingredients contain naturally occurring sugar – such as in **milk** and **fruit**. These are permitted.

Yogurt is an exception to this rule. We have made this exception because yogurt is a good source of calcium, protein and potassium as well as having the added benefit of probiotics, while still being a food that most children like. It **must** follow all other guidelines and cannot contain artificial sweeteners, sugar substitutes, artificial colors or artificial flavors.

How does sugar affect the brain?

Although the brain does require a certain amount of sugar in order to function properly, this type is known as glucose and is found naturally in foods like fruits and grains. It's sugar that's added to processed foods and beverages, that can have negative effects.

Research indicates that a diet high in added sugar reduces the production of a brain chemical known as brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF). Without BDNF, our brains can't form new memories and we can't learn (or remember) much of anything. Studies have found that a diet high in added sugar actually slows the brain down impairing communication among brain cells.

Sugar can also impact your mood and behavior - what's commonly referred to as a 'sugar crash.' When the body's blood sugar spikes and then plummets you may experience hunger, irritability, headache, fatigue, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating. In addition, over-consumption of added sugar can interfere with the neurotransmitters that help keep our moods stable.

SUGAR SUBSTITUTES AND ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Sugar substitutes are any sweetener that you use instead of regular table sugar (sucrose). Artificial sweeteners are just one type of sugar substitute. Other sugar substitutes are not considered "artificial" even though they may be made or made in part in the lab. Stevia plant extracts, for example, are considered "novel sweeteners." And some artificial sweeteners are derived from naturally occurring substances - sucralose comes from sugar, for example.

Some sugar substitutes and artificial sweeteners will be listed in the Ingredients, though may not increase the grams of sugar in the Nutrition Facts. These include:

Artificial Sweeteners

Acesulfame potassium/Ace-K/Acesulfame K (Sunnett, Sweet One)
Advantame
Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet)
Neotame
Saccharin (SugarTwin, Sweet'N Low)
Sucralose (Splenda)

Sugar Alcohols

Erythritol
Hydrogenated starch hydrolysate (HSH)
Isomalt
Lactitol
Maltitol
Mannitol
Sorbitol
Xylitol

Novel Sweeteners

Stevia extracts (Pure Via, Truvia)
Tagatose (Naturlose)
Trehalose

On nutrition labels, sugars are listed in one lump sum, combining both naturally occurring forms as well as the lower calorie substitutes listed above. To find the latter, you'll have to check the list of ingredients on the label.

Because sugar substitutes and artificial sweeteners can have the same affect on brain chemistry as sugar, they are not permitted at Hope/Legacy Charter School.

ARTIFICIAL COLORS AND FLAVORS

Requirement: Do not use any food products containing artificial colors or flavors.

Artificial colors or color additives are any substance that imparts color to a food. Color additives include both synthetic substances and substances derived from natural sources. Color additives may be used in food to enhance natural colors, add color to colorless food items, and help identify flavors (such as purple for grape flavor or yellow for lemon). Color additives are sometimes called food dyes.

Though many have already been banned, there are still nine certified color additives approved by the FDA for use in foods in the U.S.: Yellow # 5, Yellow # 6, Yellow #10, Red # 2, Red #3, Red # 4, Red #40, Blue # 1, and Blue #2.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) released a report detailing the potential of artificial food dyes to contribute to hyperactivity in children. (You can read the full PDF document [here](#).) Research suggests that some children may be susceptible to even tiny amounts of artificial dyes but that a significant number of children were affected by amounts over 35 mg per day. [Research from Purdue University](#) showed the amount of dyes in common foods was much higher than expected and that one bowl of brightly colored cereal or macaroni and cheese exceeded that amount. It was estimated that many children are consuming 3-4 times that.

Foods may contain natural colors obtained from plants such as annatto, beet juice, chlorella, carotene, turmeric, paprika, tomato puree, spinach puree, etc. These natural colorings are safe and are allowed at Hope/Legacy Charter School.

Artificial flavors come from anything that is inedible (i.e. petroleum) that is processed to create chemical flavorings. Artificial flavors are preferred by some manufacturers as they tend to be less expensive. Chances are if a food product contains artificial flavors, it is likely that it also contains artificial colors and other undesirable additives.

Artificial flavors are prohibited for many of the same reasons artificial colors are not allowed. Some studies have found that children with hyperactivity disorders such as ADHD show significant improvement in behavior when artificial flavors are greatly decreased or eliminated from their diet.

Avoid labels that list any of the additives above or say: “color added”, “U.S. certified color added”, “artificial color added”, or “artificially flavored. These products are not permitted at Hope/Legacy Charter School.

CAFFEINE

Caffeine is also found in an ever-growing variety of food and beverages. Traditional sources, such as soda, coffee, coffee-based drinks and tea continue to be prevalent. However, other sources of caffeine are emerging: chocolate, ice cream, jelly beans, lollipops, beef jerky, marshmallows, gummy bears, energy drinks and even caffeine pills.

You can even find caffeinated lip balm and caffeinated water.

Although there are limited studies on the effects of caffeine in growing children, we know it is a stimulant affecting primarily [the brain](#). Another 2014 study published in Pediatrics looked at the effects of caffeine intake on boys and girls ages 8 to 9 years and those ages 15 to 17 years. All children and teens in the study experienced changes in their [blood pressure](#) (caffeine increased it) and heart rates (caffeine slowed it down). The effects were the same in both boys and girls in the younger group, but stronger effects were seen in teen boys than in teen girls. With higher doses of caffeine, heart rates increased.

Caffeine consumption may cause other side effects including jitteriness, nervousness, upset stomach and [problems sleeping](#) and concentrating.

Products containing caffeine are not permitted at Hope/Legacy Charter School.

WATER

Water is important for our children. The quantity of water in ounces that your child needs each day is roughly his or her weight in pounds divided by 2. Therefore, if your child weighs 60 pounds, he or she needs 30 ounces or almost 4 cups of water a day (8 ounces per cup). There are many types of water and beverages available. However, plain water is best and is the type you should send with your child to Hope/Legacy. Be careful of alternative water products. Many have artificial colors, artificial flavors, sugar or sugar substitutes and caffeine added. Do not send water products or alternative water products; only plain water, please.

Your student is required to have a water bottle with them at school every day. If they do not have one, they are available for purchase on campus and you are responsible for making sure they are paid for.

BREAKFAST

Why Bother With Breakfast?

Kids who eat breakfast tend to eat healthier overall and are more likely to participate in physical activities. Skipping breakfast can make kids feel tired, restless, or irritable. Their mood and energy can drop by midmorning if they don't eat at least a small morning meal.

Also, people who don't eat breakfast often consume more calories throughout the day and are more likely to be overweight. That's because someone who skips breakfast is likely to get famished before lunchtime and snack on high-calorie foods or overeat at lunch.

Breakfast Brain Power

It's important for kids to have breakfast every day, but *what* they eat in the morning is crucial too. Children often eat primarily carbohydrates for breakfast (such as waffles with syrup and juice, donuts and Pop Tarts). Carbohydrates are used rapidly and do not keep the child satiated until the next meal and can lead to inattention, behavioral difficulties, and irritation. Choosing breakfast foods that are rich in whole grains, fiber, and protein while low in added sugar may boost kids' attention span, concentration, and memory — which they need to learn in school.

Making Breakfast Happen

It would be great to serve whole-grain waffles, fresh fruit, and low-fat milk each morning. But it can be difficult to make a healthy breakfast happen when you're rushing to get yourself and the kids ready in the morning and juggling the general household chaos.

So try these practical suggestions to ensure that — even in a rush — your kids get a good breakfast before they're out the door:

- stock your kitchen with healthy breakfast options
- prepare as much as you can the night before (get dishes and utensils ready, cut up fruit, etc.)
- get everyone up 10 minutes earlier
- let kids help plan and prepare breakfast
- have grab-and-go alternatives (fresh fruit; individual boxes or baggies of whole-grain, low-sugar cereal; yogurt or smoothies; trail mix) on days when there is little or no time to eat

We strongly encourage you to provide your child/children with a healthy breakfast to help insure their success at Hope/Legacy Charter School. Particularly before any test, make sure your child eats a breakfast rich in protein and low in added sugars.

LUNCH

Food Temperature- Use a thermos to keep warm foods warm or cold foods cold. The staff is not able to microwave food items for the students. Also, there is no refrigerator in which to keep all of the student lunches. Rather, use a small freezer pack in your child's lunch box or freeze one of the food items such as yogurt, a juice box/pouch, or a bottle of water. The frozen item helps keep the other items cold and should thaw by lunch.

Food Sensitivities/Allergies/Special Nutritional Needs- If your child has food sensitivities, allergies or other special nutritional needs, please tell your child's teacher so that they can help to meet their needs and keep them safe.

Snacks- Researchers of a study appearing in the 2014 edition of the journal Frontiers in Nutrition say that snacking on fruit lowers anxiety, boosts mood and lowers emotional distress. Unsurprisingly, scientists found that snacking on potato chips increases fatigue, poor mood states and cognitive difficulties. This means healthy snacking is not only important for your child's physical health, but emotional health as well. According to a study published in the Journal of Medicine in 2016, children who snack on healthy foods like fruit performed better in school.

We ask that you provide your child with at least a healthy snack to be eaten during the school day, and two or more if they will be participating in after school activities or After Care on campus.

Learning About Nutrition- Remember that learning about nutrition and the myriad of food products available is not an easy task. Start slowly and keep it simple. Your diligence will benefit your child and will probably cause you to make healthier choices for your entire family. If you become confused or frustrated, or have questions that were not answered in these guidelines, please talk to your child's teacher or email us at nutrition@hopecharter.org.

Attention to nutrition is one of the things that greatly benefits your child and sets Hope/Legacy Charter School apart from other schools.

NUTRITION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A healthy, balanced diet is linked with academic achievement. In fact, the absence of certain food groups or nutrients in a child's diet can negatively impact grades and attendance.

Deficits of specific nutrients like vitamins A, B6, B12, C, folate, iron, zinc and calcium are associated with lower grades and higher rates of absenteeism and tardiness among students.

Following is a list of healthy food choices for breakfast, snacks and lunch:

I. Grains (bread, cereal, rice, and pasta)

- a) Bread: whole grain or higher fiber white bread
- b) Pita bread or chips
- c) Bagels: whole grain is preferable; raisin often has sugar added
- d) Tortilla shells
- e) Rice and Pasta: watch the flavored, seasoned mixes for artificial flavors.
- f) Couscous, Barley, Bulgur
- g) English Muffins
- h) Rolls
- i) Cold and Cooked Cereal: avoid those with artificial flavors, colors or too much sugar.
- j) Pretzels- avoid the artificially flavored or artificial color added varieties
- k) Breadsticks
- l) Crackers: Whole grain is best, avoid those with artificial colors or flavors.
- m) Chips: Watch for artificial colors and flavors.
- n) Popcorn: avoid colored, sweetened or artificially flavored popcorns.
- o) Rice and Popcorn cakes: the small cheddar cheese ones are fine. The small ranch and sour cream & onion are not, due to artificial flavors. For the large rice cakes, avoid the ranch, white cheddar, caramel chocolate, etc. due to sugar and artificial flavors. The plain and low salt ones are fine. Check the labels on the others.

II. Vegetables: All vegetables are great!

- a) baby carrots
- b) grape tomatoes
- c) celery sticks
- d) zucchini sticks
- e) cucumber slices
- l) green beans
- m) asparagus,
- n) vegetable juices
- o) salad
- p) coleslaw

- f) raw mushrooms
- g) cut cauliflower
- h) broccoli
- i) garbanzo beans
- j) radishes
- k) green and red pepper slices
- q) dry beans and peas (legumes),
cooked and plain or as a salad
- r) vegetable soup: watch labels for
added sugar
- s) salsa
- t) potato salad

III. Fruits: Raw fruits are especially great for your child, and are easy to pack and to eat!

- a) bananas
- b) apple slices
- c) grapes
- d) cherries
- e) melon chunks or slices
- f) blueberries
- g) citrus sections
- h) strawberries
- i) apricots
- j) peaches
- k) nectarines
- l) mango slices
- m) pears
- n) pineapple slices
- o) avocado slices
- p) kiwi
- q) all natural applesauce
- r) canned fruit only if it has no sugar
or syrup added
- s) fruit juice only if it is 100% juice
with no sugar or colors added
- t) Frozen fruits with no sugar added
- u) Dried fruits with no sugar added

IV. Dairy:

- a) Milk: Any white unflavored milk
- b) Cheese: cheese slices, chunks, cubes, and sticks
- c) Cottage cheese
- d) Ricotta cheese
- e) Yogurt: Yogurt is the one exception to the added sugar guideline. It must follow all of the other nutrition guidelines: no sugar substitutes or artificial sweeteners, no artificial colors and no artificial flavors.

V. Protein:

- a) Dry beans and peas (legumes): also found in the vegetable group and high in protein
- b) Eggs: egg salad (avoid commercial brands with artificial coloring) or hard boiled
- c) Nuts and Seeds: avoid the mixes that contain candy or have added sugar.

- d) Nut butters: natural nut butters are best, but most brands are fine as long as they have less than 4 grams of added sugar per two tablespoons.

VI. Meat, poultry, seafood:

- a) Beef, chicken, turkey, and fish are all healthy choices.
- b) Canned seafood such as tuna and salmon are also healthy, but should be eaten in moderation.
- c) Ham, pork chops, and other pork products
- d) Lunch meats: Check the ingredient labels for added sugar, artificial colors and flavors.
- e) Tofu and Textured Soy Protein (TSP)
- f) Meat Jerky is permitted as long as the sugar content does not exceed 4 grams per serving and it does not contain artificial colors or flavors.

VII. Other:

- a) Jelly/Jam: 100% fruit jelly and jam (such as Polaner's and Smucker's Simply) are acceptable. These brands have more than 4 grams of sugar per serving, but no added sugar, so they are acceptable.
- b) Catsup/ketchup: a squeeze of catsup does not count as a vegetable! If your child likes catsup, one tablespoon of Hunt's has 4 grams of sugar, so a little catsup is fine. Preferably without high fructose corn syrup.
- c) Mustard: mustard is fine as long as the brand you choose does not have dye in it. Many are colored with Yellow # 5, so read the labels.
- d) Other condiments: read the labels and avoid if they don't meet Hope/Legacy's food guidelines.
- e) Olives: These just provide monounsaturated fat and should be used in moderation.
- f) Salad dressings and dips: please read the labels. Ranch dressing, one of the most popular flavors among kids, often has artificial colors and flavors.
- g) Cream cheese: provides fat and is acceptable within Hope/Legacy's food guidelines.
- h) Sour cream: provides fat and is acceptable within Hope/Legacy's food guidelines.
- i) Mayonnaise: read the labels as many have artificial color added.
- j) Salsa: a great way to add flavor to your food as well as some extra veggies.
- k) Hummus: a great source of protein and fiber, works well with chips and veggies.
- l) Guacamole: incredibly nutritious, great with chips or veggies or even in a wrap

LUNCH AND SNACK IDEAS

Peanut butter and 100% fruit jam, egg salad, chicken, tuna or salmon on bread

Meat and cheese sandwiches

Wrap sandwiches using the above fillings in a tortilla

Salsa or guacamole and tortilla chips

Vegetable or fruit kabobs

Pitas stuffed with vegetables and/or meat, poultry or fish

Vegetables and dip/salad dressing/hummus (or make your own with cottage cheese or plain yogurt)

Spaghetti, ravioli, lasagna

Cottage cheese and fruit

Rice cakes with peanut butter

Vegetable salad with meat and cheese added

Pasta salad

Banana dipped in peanut butter and rolled in sunflower seeds

Hard boiled eggs with crackers and vegetable juice

Tortillas wrapped around cheese, meat, and/or vegetables

Tacos

Apple slices or celery with peanut butter

Pizza

Cereal with milk or dry cereal

Popcorn sprinkled with parmesan cheese

Fresh fruit and cheese chunks or sticks

Bagels with peanut butter or cream cheese mixed with 100% fruit jam

Soup and crackers

Baked potato topped with cheese and/or meat

Quiche with vegetables and/or meat and/or cheese

Stir-fry vegetables and meat

Cold leftovers

Warm leftovers contained in a thermos

What Is Added Sugar?

During processing, sugar is added to food to enhance flavor, texture, shelf life or other properties. [Added sugar](#) is usually a mixture of simple sugars such as glucose, fructose or sucrose. Other types, such as galactose, lactose and maltose, are less common. Unfortunately, food manufacturers often hide the total amount of sugar by listing it under several different names on [ingredients lists](#).

Agave nectar	Demerara Sugar	Maltose
Barley malt	Diastatic malt	Molasses
Beet sugar	Ethyl maltol	Muscovado sugar
Brown sugar	Evaporated cane juice	Palm sugar
Brown rice syrup	Florida crystals	Panela sugar
Cane sugar	Fructose	Piloncillo
Cane juice	Fruit juice concentrate	Polydextrose
Cane juice crystals	Galactose	Raw sugar
Cane syrup	Glucose	Refiner's syrup
Caramel	Glucose solids	Rice syrup
Carob syrup	Golden sugar	Sorghum syrup
Castor sugar	Golden syrup	Sucanat
Coconut sugar	Grape sugar	Sucrose (table sugar)
Confectioner's sugar (powdered sugar)	High fructose corn syrup	Sugar
Corn sweetener	Honey	Sugar alcohols or polyols: sorbitol, gluco-sorbitol, maltitol, mannitol, gluco- mannitol, xylitol, erythritol, lactitol, isomalt
Corn syrup	Icing sugar	
Corn syrup solids	Invert sugar	
Date sugar	Lactose	Treacle sugar
Dextrin	Maple syrup	Turbinado sugar
Dextrose	Malt syrup	Yellow sugar
	Maltodextrin	