



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Series 2010-2011  
Circular Letter: C-10

**TO:** Superintendents of Schools  
**FROM:** George A. Coleman, Acting Commissioner of Education  
**DATE:** February 2, 2011  
**SUBJECT:** Requirements for Beverages Sold to Students in Schools

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has recently received numerous inquiries regarding the sales of prohibited beverages to students in public schools. This is an important reminder that the state law regarding allowable beverages in Connecticut public schools is **not** optional. It applies to all public school districts, including regional educational service centers, interdistrict magnet schools, charter schools, endowed academies and the Connecticut Technical High School System. **Compliance with the state beverage statute is required even if the district chooses not to implement healthy food certification under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes or chooses not to participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child Nutrition Programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program).**

Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) requires that any beverages sold to students on school premises must meet the state beverage requirements at *all times and from all sources* including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, a la carte sales in school cafeterias, concessions and any fundraising activities on school premises, regardless of whether they are sponsored by the school or an outside group. The five categories of allowable beverages are:

1. **Milk (flavored or plain)** with no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce and no artificial sweeteners.
2. **Nondairy milks such as soy or rice milk**, which may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners, no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat per portion and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat per portion.
3. **100 percent fruit juice, vegetable juice or combination of such juices**, containing no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners.
4. **Beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice** and have no added sugars, sweeteners (including nonnutritive sweeteners) or artificial sweeteners. These beverages must also meet the requirements specified in *Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice* at [http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Student/NutritionEd/Water\\_Juice\\_Beverages.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Student/NutritionEd/Water_Juice_Beverages.pdf).
5. **Water**, which may be flavored but contains no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine.

Portion sizes of allowable beverages are limited to no more than 12 ounces, with the exception of water. Beverages that meet the preceding requirements are included in the CSDE's *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432>.

## Requirements for Beverages Sold to Students in Schools

February 2, 2011

Page 2

Examples of beverages that are prohibited for sale to students include soda (regular and diet), coffee (decaffeinated, herbal and iced), tea (decaffeinated, herbal and iced), sports drinks (regular and diet, such as Gatorade or Powerade), energy drinks, vitamin waters, hot chocolate, juice drinks that are not 100 percent juice and any other beverages that do not belong to the five categories of allowable beverages specified by state statute.

Beverages not meeting the requirements of state statute can be sold **only** if the board of education or school governing authority has voted to allow exemptions and the following three conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. Beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute can **never** be sold in school stores or vending machines.

Additional information on the state beverage requirements is available on the CSDE Beverage Requirements Web page at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418>. Information on the requirements for healthy food certification under C.G.S. Section 10-215f is available on the CSDE Healthy Food Certification Web page at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420>.

Please share this information with all personnel responsible for beverage sales in schools. This includes school food service staff, athletic directors, culinary arts teachers, family and consumer sciences teachers, parent groups, and school organizations and individuals who oversee fundraising activities, school stores and vending machines.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Susan Fiore at [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov) or 860-807-2075.

GAC:ssf