



Mississippi Department of Education

Hank M. Bounds, Ph.D. State Superintendent of Education

Office of Healthy Schools

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Memorandum

Date: March 26, 2009
To: All School Food Service Administrators
From: Gary May
Subject: Interpretation of Vending Items

We have been asked to clarify or interpret the acceptability of vitamin waters for sale in school vending machines. The Office of Healthy Schools recognizes the critical role that adequate hydration plays in healthy weights, disease prevention, dental health, as well as academic performance. The Beverage Regulations for Mississippi Schools are designed to provide for the fluid and nutrient needs of youth, while minimizing the intake of excess discretionary calories, as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The Beverage Regulations for Mississippi Schools permits the sale of the following beverages: Water, Milk, 100% Juice, (and in High Schools) no or low calorie beverages, light juices and sports drinks. All beverages are further defined or limited based on size, calories and added sweeteners. You can review the Beverage Regulations at this web link: <http://www.cn.mde.k12.ms.us/documents/VendingRegForMSSchools06.pdf>

Our office defines water as: a life element in its natural form, unadulterated with no added elements (examples include spring water and filtered or purified water). Any enhanced water which includes added elements (vitamins, minerals, protein, oxygen, flavorings, etc.) would not be allowed in the bottled water category.

Our office defines sport drinks as: beverages intended to replenish electrolytes, sugar, water and other nutrients and are usually isotonic (contain the same proportions as found in the human body). Electrolytes found in sports drinks typically include sodium, chloride and potassium. According to the Beverage Regulations for Mississippi Schools allowed sports drinks must have no more than 66 calories per 8 ounce serving. Any enhanced water which does not contain the needed elements and/or exceeds the caloric limit would not be allowed in the sports drink category.

The only allowed beverage category that an enhanced water could potentially meet would be the "no or low calorie" beverage. To be allowed in this category, beverages may have up to 10 calories per 8 ounce serving. Any enhanced water which exceeds this caloric limit would not be allowed in this category. If you have any questions about these items or their classification or questions on other items, please contact me or the Technical Assistance Help Desk at 601-354-7017.

"Quality Education for Every Child"

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