



## PTA Newsletter October: Vending

# Make the Vending Machines a Source of Health

Vending machines are a common sight everywhere you go. Your child's school is no exception. Vending machines can play an important role in providing snacks and drinks when no other food options are available. However, they can also provide high-calorie and high-fat foods and beverages that your child does not need.

North Carolina has standards in place for vending machines in schools. These standards are stricter in elementary schools than in high schools. Many districts do not allow vending machines for students in elementary and even middle schools.

When vending machines are available, it is important that they contain healthy options. Your Local Wellness Policy can make sure this happens. The Policy can set guidelines for what items are in the vending machines. It can require that healthy options such as low-fat or non-fat milk, bottled water, or 100% fruit juice are available. A good rule-of-thumb is to require that all items in the vending machines meet the guidelines for à la carte food items sold in the cafeteria. These guidelines are based on how many calories and how much fat and sugar are in foods.

In addition, your Local Wellness Policy can determine when vending machines are available. It can require high schools to turn off vending machines until the last bus has left in the afternoon.

Ensuring that healthy options are available in vending machines helps students learn to make healthy choices.

### **For more information:**

[www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/programs\\_tools/school/successful\\_students.html](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/programs_tools/school/successful_students.html)

[www.nutritionnc.com/ResourcesForSchools/index.htm](http://www.nutritionnc.com/ResourcesForSchools/index.htm)

[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)