

Guidance for Use of Food in Schools During COVID-19

This guidance document is based on Government of Ontario guidelines and recommendations. School board policies and workplace requirements may differ from the information below.

Instructional-Based Food Use

Examples of instructional-based food use may include hospitality programs, curriculum-based activities like planting seeds or food tasting, or packing of food for student nutrition programs as part of a learning program.

Students and staff involved in instructional-based learning that involves food handling and/or preparation must follow these guidelines:

- Follow the food handling and sanitation practices required by the [Ontario Food Premise Regulations](#).
- Hands should be washed with soap and water before and after preparing food and as often as necessary to prevent the contamination of food, utensils, and equipment.
- Ensure that physical distancing can be maintained within the food preparation space.
- Medical masks or face coverings should be worn as per provincial or school board guidance. Masks may be temporarily removed indoors to consume food or drink, with a minimum distance of two metres maintained between cohorts and as much distancing as possible within a cohort.
- Food should not be shared. Students may consume only the food they have individually prepared or food that has been prepared by the instructor.
- Ensure that physical distancing is maintained while students are eating the food prepared during a class.
- Eating surfaces should be cleaned and sanitized before and after eating food.
- Leftover food must not be re-purposed or redistributed.

Third-Party Food Services

- Nutrition/third party food programs and non-instructional food events (such as a pizza day) are permitted to operate, provided that food handlers use adequate food handling and safety practices.
- These services must be delivered in a way that allows any interested student to participate.
- Food or beverages offered through these services must be in accordance with the [School Food and Beverage Policy, 2010](#) or [Student Nutrition Program Guidelines, 2016](#) (as applicable) or be counted toward one of the ten special-event exemption days.
- Any surfaces, bins, or containers used for these programs should be disinfected before and after use.