



# DANNON INSTITUTE®

## Nutrition for Health

### PROVIDING ECONOMICAL AND HEALTHY SCHOOL FOODS

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Financial management is a critical issue for schools, including the Food Service Department. Food costs, as well as labor, supplies, equipment and fixed expenses, must be managed in order to meet budgets. The major funding is revenue from federal meal reimbursements; some school districts receive additional funds from states. Several organizations have excellent materials to assist Food Service Directors with financial management. These are identified below.

Often districts rely on revenues from competitive foods (items sold in schools that are not part of the reimbursable meal), a la carte sales and vending machine sales to meet their budgets. There are few federal guidelines for competitive foods. The Institute of Medicine 2007 report, Nutrition Standards For Foods In Schools: Leading The Way Toward Healthier Youth, offered guidelines for foods sold outside the federal meals programs. Some states have also established nutrition standards for school foods and beverages. There are healthy food and beverage items that meet such nutrition standards. The involvement of students, parents and school staff is crucial to planning healthy items that are acceptable to the target audiences. Helpful tips can be found at the following sites.

- **The School Nutrition Association** (<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/>) has great resources for Food Service Departments,
- **National Food Service Management Institute** (NFSMI) at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)  
Provides:
  - Training materials on Financial Management, First Choice: A Purchasing Systems Manual for School Food Service, Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Instructor Manual and Participant Workbook, Measuring Success with Standardized Recipes.
  - Telecasts on effective financial management, cooperative purchasing, procurement and inventory control
  - Fact sheets on research related to cost control, purchasing, and financial decision making.
- **Food and Nutrition Information Center Healthy Meals Resource System** at <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov>  
Provides:
  - Purchasing and Procurement resource list and Menu Planning and Preparation resource list.
  - Web site links to materials developed by State agencies, other government agencies, and food product associations.
- **Nutrition Standards For Foods In Schools: Leading The Way Toward Healthier Youth.** 2007. Washington, D.C. Institute of Medicine/National Academies Press.  
<http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2007/Nutrition-Standards-for-Foods-in-Schools-Leading-the-Way-toward-Healthier-Youth.aspx>

*Dr. Cullen is an expert in health promotion and education, specifically school food policy and student food selection. She currently is evaluating the effect of Texas school food policy changes on food selection in Texas schools. Dr. Finn is CEO of The American Council for Fitness and Nutrition, which is dedicated to teaching children the important concept of energy balance. In teaching lifelong wellness habits children must learn that what they eat and what they do must be in balance.*

*The Dannon Institute is a separately incorporated, 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation dedicated to non-commercial activities. Launched in 1997, The Dannon Institute was established as an independent foundation to promote research, education and communication about the link between nutrition and good health. The Dannon Institute | 100 Hillside Avenue, 3rd Fl, White Plains, NY 10603-2863 | Tel: 914-872-8543*

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