# NUTRITION STANDARDS FAQ

**WHAT IS THE HEALTHY, HUNGER FREE KIDS ACT?**

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 authorizes funding for federal school meal and child nutrition programs and increases access to healthy food for low-income children. This particular bill reauthorizes child nutrition programs for five years and includes $4.5 billion in new funding for these programs over 10 years.

**WHAT DOES THE HEALTHY, HUNGER FREE KIDS ACT DO?**

- Gives the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) the authority to set nutritional standards for all foods regularly sold in schools during the school day, including vending machines, a la carte/snack lines, and school stores.
- Provides additional funding to schools that meet updated nutritional standards for federally-subsidized lunches.
- Helps communities establish local farm to school networks, create school gardens, and ensures that more local foods are used in the school setting.
- Expands access to drinking water in schools, particularly during meal times.
- And more. Click here for more information.

**ARE THE ENTIRE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS* DIFFERENT THAN THE NATIONAL STANDARDS?**

There are some differences between them. See the comparison chart for the differences between the venues in schools that are affected by each set of standards. The national standards are being implemented in one area at a time. USDA is in the process of finalizing nutrition standards for school meals. USDA has not yet created nutrition standards for food and beverages sold outside of school meals known as competitive foods.

**WHEN DO THE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS* GO INTO EFFECT?**

The State Board of Education approved the standards on October 12, 2010. A good time for schools to implement the standards would be during the 2011-2012 school year.

**DO SCHOOLS HAVE TO FOLLOW THE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS*?**

The standards are a recommendation from the State Board of Education. At this time, they are not mandated.

**WHICH STANDARD ARE SCHOOLS SUPPOSED TO FOLLOW FOR SCHOOL MEALS?**

USDA's nutrition standard for school meals. Final rule is anticipated to go into effect for the 2012-2013 school year. In the interim, schools are encouraged to implement the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*.

**HOW ARE THE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS* FOR SCHOOL MEALS DIFFERENT FROM THE NATIONAL STANDARDS?**

At this time, USDA has not published the final rule for school meal standards. A comparison chart between the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* and USDA's proposed final rule are included in this toolkit.

**WHAT STANDARDS SHOULD SCHOOLS FOLLOW FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES SOLD OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL MEALS?**

USDA's competitive food standards have not been created as of September 2011. The standards are anticipated to be implemented for the 2013-2014 school year. In the interim, schools are encouraged to implement the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*, as these comprehensive standards provide a way for schools to prepare for the anticipated national competitive foods standards.