

Ganado Unified School District No. 20

Post Office Box 1757 • Ganado, Arizona 86505

Telephone: 928.755.1000 • Fax: 928.755.1012

District Website: www.ganado.k12.az.us

August 4, 2026

Dear Parents and Community Members,

The District would like to inform you about an important change that has taken into effect for the 2026-2027 school year in accordance with House Bill 2164, the Arizona Healthy Schools Act, which was approved on July 1, 2026. This new legislation aims to promote healthier eating habits among our students by reducing access to certain ultra-processed foods during the regular school day.

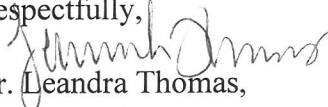
Under this law, our food service department will remain compliant with all state and federal nutrition requirements, ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals. However, the implementation of the Arizona Healthy Schools Act will impact classroom celebrations, birthday parties, school-sponsored events, and similar activities during school hours. Specifically, the law prohibits schools from serving, selling, or allowing third parties to sell foods containing certain ingredients during the regular school day, defined as midnight through 30 minutes after the end of the school day.

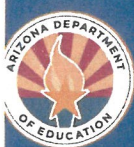
We understand that this may bring about some adjustments to how we celebrate special occasions within our schools. Our goal is to create a healthier environment for our students while still allowing for meaningful celebrations. We encourage parents to consider healthier alternatives for classroom celebrations and events.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these changes, please do not hesitate to reach out to the GUSD Food Services department. We appreciate your understanding and support as we work together to promote the health and well-being of our students.

Thank you for your cooperation. Additional information is attached for your information from the Arizona Department of Education regarding this newly approved Act.

Respectfully,


Dr. Leandra Thomas,
Superintendent



The Basics of the **Arizona Healthy Schools Act**

Effective at the start of the 2026-2027 school year, the Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01, prohibits public schools participating in federally funded or assisted meal programs from serving, selling, or allowing a third party to sell ultra-processed food on the school campus during the regular school day. This resource outlines what school administrators need to know about this new ordinance.

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act **prohibits** schools from **serving, selling, or allowing a third party to sell ultra-processed food** on the school campus during the **regular school day**.

1

Defining Ultra-Processed Foods

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act defines ultra-processed foods as those with the following eleven ingredients:

- potassium bromate;
- propylparaben;
- titanium dioxide;
- brominated vegetable oil;
- yellow dye 5 or 6;
- blue dye 1 or 2;
- green dye 3; or
- red dye 3 or 40.

2

Defining the School Day

A school day, for the applicability of this law, is defined as **midnight before to 30 minutes after** the end of the instructional day.



Schools must adhere to serving foods that do not contain the 11 specified food additives in lunches, vending machines, snack bars, and school stores **during the regular school day**.

- **Please note, this ruling **does not** apply to food brought from home by students.**

3

Compliance

[Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01 Certification of Compliance](#)

To demonstrate and certify compliance, Local Educational Agencies must:

- Submit the [Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01 Certification of Compliance](#). ADE is required to collect and publish a list of public schools that have certified compliance with the requirements of A.R.S. §15-242.01. The list will be published on July 1, 2026, on the HNS website.
- Continue to meet existing federal guidelines under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS:

- **Conduct a Compliance Audit:** Inventory all food/beverage sources on campus; compare ingredients to the banned-ingredient list.
- **Train Staff & Vendors:** Educate cafeteria, vending, store, and event personnel to identify disallowed ultra-processed foods.
- **Submit Certification:** Complete the attestation to confirm compliance status.
- **Update Community Communication:** Provide clear guidance to the public and external vendors on prohibited items.
- **Monitor Ongoing Compliance:** Review new products, fundraising plans, and third-party sales ahead of events.



The Basics of the **Arizona Healthy Schools Act**

Effective at the start of the 2026-2027 school year, the Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01, prohibits public schools participating in federally funded or assisted meal programs from serving, selling, or allowing a third party to sell ultra-processed food on the school campus during the regular school day. This resource outlines what school administrators need to know about this new ordinance.

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act **Frequently Asked Questions**

Q: Is the attestation available?

A: Yes. Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01 Certification of Compliance is available on the HNS website <https://www.azed.gov/hns>.

Q: Is there a date Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) need to complete the attestation by?

A: Yes. School administrators should submit the certification of compliance by the start of the 2026-2027 school year, July 1, 2026.

Q: Who in a LEA will be responsible for submitting the attestation of compliance with A.R.S 15-242.01?

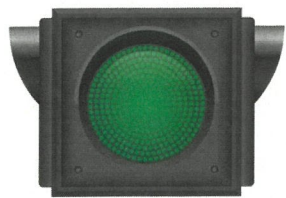
A: The individual responsible for submitting the attestation is a business decision for the LEA. ADE does not have specific parameters regarding who needs to submit the attestation. LEAs should keep in mind that this is a campus-wide requirement and consider who is responsible for campus-wide compliance with laws and policies.

Q: If a parent brings in food for the class (i.e. class party) do these rules apply? Or can a parent only bring in foods for their child? What about food rewards for perfect attendance, test scores, behavior?

A: A.R.S. 15-242.01 prohibits the service or sale of ultra-processed foods at any point of the school day. This includes student celebrations, birthday parties, prizes/incentives, and classroom snacks. A.R.S. 15-242.01 does not prevent a student's parent or guardian from providing ultra-processed food to the student during the regular school day.

Arizona Healthy Schools Act

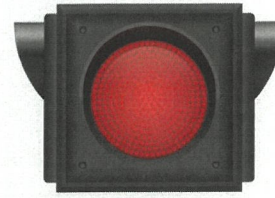
Arizona has a new law called the Arizona Healthy Schools Act. This law changes what types of foods are allowed to be served, sold and shared at public schools that participate in federal meal programs, such as free and reduced lunch. The new law applies to all Amphitheater schools.



Choose: Fresh fruits and vegetables; cheese; nuts and seeds; plain popcorn; some plain tortilla chips and plain potato chips (check labels); crackers; baked goods without brightly colored icing.

What you need to know:

- **Parents/guardians may pack any lunch or snack for their own child.**
- Food to be shared with other students does have to comply with the law. Think birthday treats, class party items, etc.
- Any food sold by PTO's, booster clubs, or third parties during school hours has to comply with the law.
- Food provided by our school meal programs is already in compliance.



Generally avoid: Brightly colored items such as candies, fruit snacks, beverages, cupcakes, cookies and donuts; colored cereals; gelatin desserts; popsicles and frozen treats; any food with bright red, blue, green, or neon colors.

Note: The Arizona Healthy Schools Act applies to food offered on campus during the school day, which is defined as midnight until 30 minutes after the school day. Events held off-campus or outside of the defined school day are not restricted by the law.

What is considered ultra-processed?

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act defines ultra-processed foods as those with one or more of the following banned ingredients:



- Potassium Bromate
- Propylparaben
- Titanium Dioxide
- Brominated Vegetable Oil
- Yellow Dye 5
- Yellow Dye 6
- Blue Dye 1
- Blue Dye 2
- Green Dye 3
- Red Dye 3
- Red Dye 40

Want to read the Healthy Schools Act (HB-2164)? [Find it here.](#)