

Official Report on the Proposed Amendments to Board Policy 705 – Food & Nutrition

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Introduction:

The proposed amendments would eliminate the current allowances that permit schools a set number of fundraisers involving food (Elementary: 5; Middle: 10; High/Alt: 15 events) and would enforce USDA Smart Snack standards for any food sold during the official school day, defined as *midnight prior to school through 30 minutes after the instructional day ends*. These changes would, in effect, prevent many traditional food-based fundraising activities, including concessions, candy grams, and after-school sales.

The following report reflects the concerns, perspectives, and collective stance of the students of George Washington High School.

Summary of GWHS Student Feedback:

1. Financial Impact on Student Activities: Students overwhelmingly expressed concern that removing food-based fundraising exemptions will severely limit the ability of student councils, clubs, sports teams, and graduating classes to raise necessary funds. The majority of funds for prom, senior activities, class dues, and club events come from food sales, particularly:

- After-school sales
- Concession stands
- Plate lunch fundraisers
- Candy grams and seasonal food events

Students emphasized that GDOE does not financially cover prom, graduation, or most student organization activities, making fundraising essential for student success. Removing food sales without offering alternative funding mechanisms would place a disproportionate burden on students and families.

2. Student Choice & Nutrition: Students expressed that the proposed amendments:

- Restrict their personal freedom to choose what to eat outside cafeteria hours
- Will not increase cafeteria meal participation, as consumer choice is independent of policy restrictions
- Ignore that many students do not eat or enjoy school meals, often due to limited variety or personal preferences
- Could lead to students skipping meals entirely, which is more harmful than allowing occasional “unhealthy” options

Multiple students stated that snacks or small meals purchased after school help sustain those who stay late for extracurriculars, sports, or academic responsibilities, especially those who cannot go home to eat immediately.

3. Cultural & Community Traditions: Students questioned how the terms “*culturally relevant*” and “*culturally-related celebrations*” would be interpreted.

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- They stressed that these traditions: such as Christmas grams, Valentine grams, fiesta plates, shaved ice at games, are part of school culture and community, regardless of whether they fit an ethnic definition of “cultural relevance.” **Removing these events would diminish school spirit, morale, and cultural identity.**

4. Safety & Accessibility Concerns:

- Students voiced that after-school food sales:
- Reduce the need for students to walk to nearby stores, improving safety
- Provide accessible food to student-athletes and those involved in after-school activities
- Support the needs of students who may not have food available at home after school

5. Loss of Learning Opportunities: Students identified that food sales provide real-world skill development, consistent with GDOE’s mission to prepare students for life:

- Entrepreneurship
- Customer service
- Marketing
- Financial literacy
- Event organization
- **Restricting these opportunities contradicts the department’s stated goals for student readiness and life skills.**

GWHS Student Body Position on the Proposed Amendments

Based on the feedback gathered, **George Washington High School strongly opposes** the proposed amendments to Board Policy 705 that would:

- Remove the exemptions allowing food-based fundraising events
- Restrict after-school food sales
- Limit student organizations' ability to generate funds

The GWHS student body asserts that these proposed changes:

1. Disproportionately harm students, who rely on fundraising for core school experiences
2. Do not impact cafeteria participation
3. Restrict personal choice in ways that do not support student well-being
4. Eliminate essential learning opportunities tied to real-world skills
5. Disrupt school culture and community engagement
6. Create financial hardship for student councils, classes, and organizations

The student body requests that the Board maintain the existing exemptions established in earlier policy revisions, which were originally supported by IBOGS leadership and designed to prevent conflicts with school meals while still allowing food fundraisers.

Overall, not a single student expressed support for eliminating the current exemptions.

Questions Students Request the Board to Address

Students request clarification on:

1. What prompted this amendment now, considering the exemption system has been in place since 2006?
2. How does this change align with GDOE's mission to prepare students for life?
3. If food fundraisers are eliminated, will GDOE provide financial support for student activities (e.g., prom, graduation, club events)?
4. What is the specific definition of "culturally relevant" events? (elaborate in the proposal)
5. What alternative fundraising methods does the Board recommend or plan to provide?

These questions reflect the students' desire for transparency and collaborative decision-making.

Conclusion: George Washington High School's student body, clubs, organizations, and council representatives collectively express strong opposition to the proposed amendments to Board Policy 705 that eliminate food-related fundraising exemptions.

Students assert that the policy change would:

- Undermine their ability to fund education-related milestones
- Limit student autonomy
- Create safety and accessibility issues
- Negatively impact school culture
- Remove valuable opportunities for skill development
- Burden families financially

GWHS respectfully urges the Guam Education Board to retain the current exemptions allowing food-based fundraising events and to consider student perspectives as a central component in policy decisions that directly affect them.