

**North Carolina Department of
Environment And Natural Resources**

Division of Environmental Health

Michael F. Easley, Governor
William G. Ross, Jr, Secretary
Linda C. Sewall, Director
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December 4, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Environmental Health Directors, Supervisors and Coordinators

FROM: Warren B. Richardson, Regional Environmental Health Specialist
Children's Environmental Health Branch

THROUGH: Ed Norman, Program Supervisor
Children's Environmental Health Branch

SUBJECT: Kitchen Requirements for School-based Child Care Centers

Several questions have been raised concerning kitchen equipment requirements for school-based child care centers. This policy memo is directed at all such centers including pre-school age, special needs, as well as after school programs, which are licensed through the Division of Child Development. In the Rules Governing the Sanitation of Child Care Centers, 15A NCAC 18A .2810, "SPECIFICATIONS FOR KITCHENS," indicates that minimum kitchen equipment is needed at each child care center location even when food is catered from a permitted food service establishment, such as a school cafeteria. Furthermore, food service equipment is required to be evaluated during each child care sanitation inspection. This memo is intended to clarify these issues.

When a school-based child care program is licensed as a center and receives all meals and snacks from the school cafeteria, a review of the critical items in the cafeteria (during the child care sanitation inspection) and verification that the cafeteria has been inspected in accordance with 15A NCAC 18A .2600 is sufficient to determine that the minimum kitchen equipment are operable and being utilized properly. Moreover, there is no need for minimum kitchen equipment at each child care center location in a school so long as each center receives all food supplies prepared and ready to serve from a permitted food service establishment, which is located at the same school campus and provides food during all hours of child care operation. In addition, all utensils and other kitchen equipment must be provided by the same permitted food service establishment and returned immediately after use for cleaning and sanitizing. If the school cafeteria is not accessible during the times that each child care center is in operation, provisions must be made for the protection and proper storage of food supplies as required in 15A NCAC 18A .2805 and .2806.

The child care sanitation rules are currently being revised and this policy will be incorporated into the rules in the near future. Please contact me at (336) 771-4608 (ext. 383) or Ed Norman at (919) 715-3293 with any additional questions regarding this issue.

