

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEAL SERVICES

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of good nutrition to each student's educational performance. The Board may provide needy children with breakfast and lunch at a reduced rate or at no charge to the student. Children, eligible for free or reduced-price meals, shall be determined by the criteria established by the Child Nutrition Program. These criteria are issued annually by the Federal government through the State Department of Education. The Board designates the Business Manager to determine in accordance with the above criteria, the eligibility of students for free and/or reduced-price meals."

This will be reviewed for approval at the annual meeting of the Board of Education in July of each school year.

Availability, Application & Notification

Notice of the availability of the meal programs will be sent to the homes of students, local media, the local unemployment office and large employers experiencing layoffs in the area from which the district draws its attendance. Any child who is a member of a family unit whose income is below the federally established scale shall be eligible to receive such services.

To apply for the meal program:

- a. Application forms will be available in the main office of each school building and on the district web site and can be completed and submitted at any time during the year.
- b. Completed forms must be submitted to the Building Principal of the school which the student attends prior to any determination of eligibility.
- c. The parent or guardian will be informed of the determination within one week of receiving a properly completed application.

Applications will be kept confidential.

Upon written request, the Superintendent will hear appeals of determinations regarding such services in compliance with federal regulations governing the National School Lunch Program.

In addition, in order to reach students who are categorically eligible for the district's meal program and to comply with state law, three times per school year District administration will review the list made available by the State Education Department of children ages three to 18 who are in households receiving federal food assistance, Medicaid benefits (for certain recipients), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to identify students within the district. The district will send a notice to those families apprising them of their student's eligibility to participate in the school meal programs without further application. Parents may decline participation by informing the district in writing. If the service is declined, the student will be removed from the eligibility list.

The Building Principal in conjunction with the head chef/cook will establish meal time procedures that both protect the anonymity of the student and allow for proper accounting.

Community Eligibility

If the district can show that the percentage of students eligible for free school meals at any one school, or group of schools, or the entire school district, is at least 40%, the district may elect for the school, schools, or district to participate in the Community Eligibility option. Pursuant to federal law and regulations, the school would provide all students at that school or schools with free breakfast and lunch, pursuant to federal regulations. The district would receive federal reimbursement corresponding to the percentage of eligible students. If the reimbursement received by the district is not sufficient to cover total nonprofit school food service program costs, non-federal funds must be used to pay the difference.

Pursuant to federal regulations, under the Community Eligibility option, student eligibility is based on household receipt of food assistance (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)), income assistance (TANF), or Medicaid benefits (for certain income levels), student participation in Head Start, or recognition of the student as homeless, runaway, migrant, or in foster care.

All affected households will receive prior notification that the school is operating under the Community Eligibility provision.

Cross-ref: 8500, Food Service Management

Ref: National School Lunch Act of 1946, as amended, (42 U.S.C. §§1751-1760)
Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, (42 USC §§1771 et seq.)
7 CFR Part 245 (245.2, Definitions; 245.5, public announcement; 245.6, categorical eligibility and direct certification/verification.)
Social Services Law §95(7)
U.S. Department of Education guidance document, *The Community Eligibility Provision and Selected Requirements Under Title I*, January 2014,
www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/13-0381guidance.doc.

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