

## FREE OR REDUCED COST MEALS ELIGIBILITY AND MEAL CHARGES

Students enrolled and attending school in the school district, who are unable to afford the special milk program, the cost or a portion of the cost of the school lunch and supplemental foods, will be provided the school food program services at no cost or at a reduced cost.

It shall be the responsibility of the administration to follow state and federal guidelines to determine if a student qualifies for free or reduced cost school food services. Students, will not be denied the school food program services simply because the paperwork has not been completed.

Employees, students and others will be required to purchase for meals consumed.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations for implementing this policy.

The district shall comply with all state and federal laws applying to providing free and reduced meals under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and other related federal grant programs.

Free or Reduced Meals Eligibility: Families of students enrolled in the district who wish to qualify for free or reduced price meals may submit an application on or after July 1 for the current school year. If the financial situation of a household changes during the school year, they may submit a new application to become eligible. Applications are available at the Central Administrative Office of the school building.

Meal Charges: The written meal charge policy and guidelines shall be in place before the beginning of each school year and parents shall be advised of the available payment systems and meal prices. The district will encourage pre-payment of meal balances but the district must include a method for adding funds during the school day such as cash payments at the school office. All balances remaining in accounts shall carry over to the next month. Balances of households qualifying for free or reduced meals with funds remaining in the account at the end of the school year shall receive a refund. The district shall attempt to contact the household of any student transferring out or graduating from the district to return any unused funds remaining in the student's account. The district may set varying meal charge guidelines for students of different grade levels including charges relating to alternate meals, ala carte items and limits on charges that a parent may set for a student's daily lunch expenditures.

The district must set written guidelines regarding the collection of delinquent meal charges such as the amount of delinquent meal charges which initiate an established collection process, providing notice to households of those students and carrying out appropriate follow-up.

Approved: 03/19/2012 Last Reviewed: 03/19/2018 Revised: 02/19/2018

Confidentiality: The information provided by families on the free and reduced price application will be used only for determining eligibility for meal or milk benefits and verification of eligibility. Only staff members and organizations carrying out the activities of the School Lunch Act shall have access to this information.

The district should use methods of lunch payment systems such as pre-payment to avoid openly identifying children who qualify for free or reduced meals. Meal cards, tickets, tokens or other methods of payment must not be coded or colored to identify such status.

Policy Communication: This policy will be provided to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the district during the school year.

This policy will also be provided annually to all district staff responsible for enforcing the policy including food service professionals. Staff members such as counselors, school nurses, homeless liaisons, and others assisting students in need should also be informed of the policy.

The district will maintain documentation of the annual distribution of this policy.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to implement this policy.

Legal Reference:                   42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 et seq.  
                                          7 C.F.R. §§ 210 et seq.  
                                          USDA Unpaid Meal Charges, SP 46-2016, 47-2016 and  
                                          57-2016.

Cross Reference:                 504.19 Student Fees