

Business/Non Instructional Operations

Free or Reduced Price Lunches

Participation in the National School Lunch Program

National School Lunch Program regulations require that lunches be provided for ~~needy~~ students **in need** when family income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities, including food of the proper quality and amount for good nutrition. Free meals will be served to children from families whose income falls within the current criteria established by the Secretary of Agriculture under the Federal Lunch Program for free lunches.

Parents / **guardians** shall be informed of the district policy concerning "Free or Reduced-Price Lunches." A letter and application form will be distributed to all parents / **guardians** during the opening weeks of school. The letter will contain information on the eligibility standards, procedures for applying for free or reduced-price lunches, and how an appeal may be filed for an adjustment in the decision with respect to the application. This information and an application form will be provided whenever a new student is enrolled.

A public news release containing this same information will be made available to local news representatives early in the school year. Copies of this public release will be made available upon request to any interested party. Subsequent changes in the eligibility standards during the school year, will also be publicly announced.

Free or reduced-price lunches will be provided for all students who qualify on the basis of financial need. Breakfast snacks may be provided in cases of extreme nutritional deficiency.

The District shall ensure that, in its operation and implementation of the free and reduced-price lunch program, no student shall be discriminated against because of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

No child shall be physically segregated or discriminated against because of his/her inability to pay for a meal. The names of children eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals shall not be published, posted, or announced in any manner, and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets, or by any other means.

Requests for free lunches, reduced-price lunches, which have been denied may be appealed to the Superintendent.

Eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunches program will be based on the following:

a) Emergency Situations

A child's statement of need is sufficient for providing assistance on a temporary basis. A family contact should be made immediately to determine extent and probable duration of need. In cases of family emergency such as sudden unemployment, illness, death, desertion, etc., assistance will be provided as needed.

b) Objective Standards of Need

Eligibility for assistance, other than that for emergency situations, will be determined on the basis of income and family size as indicated on the scale provided by the District based on the National School Lunch Program regulations.

If school authorities feel that a family's financial situation has changed, and the students are no longer eligible for free meals, a hearing procedure will be used by the Superintendent to challenge the continued eligibility. In the event of such a challenge, the family will be given a reasonable period of time in advance of the hearing to review the information on which the challenge is based. Children will continue to receive free meals until the conclusion of the hearing.

On a case-by-case basis, when a student is known to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals benefits and the household fails to submit a confidential application, the Superintendent or his/her designee may complete an application for the student documenting how he/she knows the household income qualifies the student for free or reduced-price meal benefits. Parents/guardians of a student approved for free or reduced-price meals benefits, when application is made for the student by a school official, will be notified of the decision and given the opportunity to decline benefits.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

10-215 Lunches, Breakfasts and the Feeding Programs for Public School Children and Employees.

10-215a Non-Public School Participation in Feeding Program.

10-215b Duties of State Board of Education Re: Feeding Programs.

10-216 Payment of Expenses.

Title VII, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq. as amended by Title IX, Equal Employment Opportunity Act.

United States Department of Agriculture 7 C.F.R. 15, re nondiscrimination.

42 U.S.C. Sec. 1758, 7 CFR Part 145, Sec. 245.5, 245.6 245.7 210.9, 210.20.

USDA Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual.

USDA, FNS Instruction 765-7 rev. 2: Handling Lost, Stolen and Misused Meal Tickets.

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. 42 U.S.C. 1751 §203, 205.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance, 7 C.F.R. Part 15b (2001).

Policy adopted: ~~December 20, 2021~~

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut