

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Free or Reduced Price Lunches

Participation in the National School Lunch Program

Participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (and School Breakfast Programs) (SBP) is/are herewith authorized. Authorization is granted to the Superintendent to act on behalf of the Board for purposes of participating in the National School Lunch Program (and School Breakfast Program).

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.

The District shall establish an appeals process under which a parent/guardian may appeal a decision regarding his/her initial application for benefits, or any subsequent reduction or termination of benefits.

The schools shall not physically segregate or discriminate against any child because of his or her inability to pay for a meal. The names of children eligible to receive free meals shall not be published, posted, or announced in any manner; and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets, or by any other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.

The District shall ensure that, in the operation of the free and reduced-price meals and/or free milk programs, 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, in its implementation of such a program.

The District's NSLP and SBP shall operate to meet dietary specifications in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and applicable state laws and regulations.

(cf. 3542 – School Lunch Program)

(cf. 3542.33 – Food Sales Other Than National School Lunch Program)

(cf. 3542.43 – Charging Policy)

(cf. 6142.101 – Student Nutrition and Physical Wellness, School Wellness)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees.

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.

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Participation in the National School Lunch Program

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)
42 U.S.C. Sec. 1758, 7 CFR Part 145, Sec. 245.5, 245.6, 245.7, 210.9, 210.20
U.S.D.A., Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual
U.S.D.A., 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: April 4, 2017

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Newtown, Connecticut

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Free or Reduced Price Lunches (National School Lunch Program)

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) regulations require that lunches be provided for needy students when the family income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities, including food of the proper quality and amount for good nutrition.

Parents shall be informed of the district policy concerning "Meals for Needy Children." A letter and application form will be distributed to all parents during the first few weeks of school. The letter will contain information on the eligibility standards, procedures for applying for free "Meals for Needy Children," 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 also be provided whenever a new student is enrolled. (cf. 3542.42 - Finance: Food Service)

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 district eligibility standards during the school year, which are approved by the state agency, will also be publicly announced.

1. Free or reduced price lunches and/or supplementary milk 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.
2. There shall be no discrimination in the furnishings of meals or supplementary milk because of race, religion, source of income, etc.
3. The anonymity of students receiving assistance under this regulation shall be protected. The names of these students will be treated in a confidential manner. They will use the same tickets for milk and lunch and will obtain these items in the same manner and place as do all other children.
4. Requests for free lunches, reduced price lunches, and/or supplementary milk which have been denied may be appealed to the Superintendent.
5. Records of students receiving assistance will be kept in each school. A monthly report will be submitted to the district office where records for audit purposes will be maintained.
6. The District will establish process for reimbursable student meals. The price charged to students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals will be established by the District in compliance with state and federal laws. (*Note: The new requirement under Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, 42 U.S.C. 1751 §§205 established new criteria for equity in school lunch pricing.*)

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Free or Reduced Price Lunches (National School Lunch Program) (continued)

7. The price charged to students who qualify for reduced price meals will be established in compliance with state and federal laws. (According to Direct Certification and Certification of Homeless, Migrant and Runaway Children for Free School Meals, 7 C.F.R. Part 245, 2011)
8. Eligibility for the "Meals for Needy Children" 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 for emergency situations, will be determined on the basis of income and family size as indicated on the scale provided by the district.
9. 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.
10. On a case-by-case basis, when a student is known to be eligible for free or reduced price meal (or free milk) benefits and the household fails to submit a confidential application, the Superintendent or 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 of a student approved for free or reduced price 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.
11. The District has established a fair hearing process under which a household can appeal a decision with respect to the household's application for benefits or any subsequent reduction or termination of benefits.
12. In the event of major employers contemplating large layoffs in the attendance area of the District, the District is encouraged to provide confidential applications and eligibility criteria for free and reduced price meals (or free milk) to the employer for distribution to affected employees.

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Free or Reduced Price Lunches (National School Lunch Program) (continued)

Financial Management of the Nonprofit School Food Service

1. The District will maintain a nonprofit school nutrition and food service operation.
2. Revenues earned by the school nutrition and food services will be used only for the operation or improvement of NSLP (,) (and) (SBP).
3. Lunch and breakfast meals served to teachers, administrators, custodians and other adults not directly involved with the operation of the District's nutrition and food services will be priced to cover all direct and indirect cost of preparing and serving the meal.

(Note: For meals with portion sizes equivalent to student meals, the adult meal price will be not less than the amount of reimbursement for a free-eligible meal, plus the value of commodity foods used in the meal preparation.)

4. The District will maintain effective control and accountability for, and adequately safeguard, all nutrition and food services' cash, real and personal property, equipment and other assets, and ensure they are used solely for nutrition and food services purposes.
5. The District will meet the requirements for allowable NSLP (,) (and) (SBP) (SMP) costs as described in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circular A-87.
6. All procurement transactions for nutrition and food services goods and services will be conducted according to state, federal and district procurement standards using the applicable cost thresholds.
7. In the operation of its nutrition and food services program, the District will purchase food products that are produced in the United States, whenever possible.

Nutrition and Menu Planning

1. Meals and snacks served for reimbursement will meet the recommendations of the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Meals served for reimbursement will meet at least the minimum NSLP (and SBP) requirements for food item and quantities.
3. Meals served for reimbursement will:
 - a. Meet all minimum and maximum calorie requirements by grade level;
 - b. Meet the maximum standards set for saturated fat;
 - c. Meet the maximum standards set for sodium by grade level; and
 - d. Meet the requirement for zero grams of trans fats.

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Nutrition and Menu Planning (continued)

4. The District will use the offer versus serve option when serving program lunches to students below senior high school grades. Students below high school grades will be required to take (three of the five food items) including one-half cup of fruit or vegetable offered in program lunches.
5. The District will use the offer versus serve option when serving program breakfasts to students below senior high school grades. Students below high school grades will be required to take three of the four food items including one-half cup of fruit offered in program breakfasts.

Use and Control of Commodity Foods

1. The District will accept and use commodity foods in as large a quantity as may be efficiently utilized in the reimbursable lunch (and breakfast) program
2. The District will maintain necessary safeguards to prevent theft or spoilage of commodity foods.
3. The value of commodity foods used for any food production other than NSLP, SBP or snacks shall be replaced in the food service inventory.

General USDA NSLP/SBP/SMP Requirements

1. The District will ensure that no student is denied a meal as a disciplinary action.
2. Breakfast will be served in the morning hours, at or near the beginning of the student's school day.
3. Lunch will be served between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
4. The District will provide substitute foods for students who are determined by a licensed physician to be legally disabled and whose disability restricts their diet. Substitutions will be provided only when a medical statement from the licensed physician is on file at the school. The medical statement must state the nature of the child's disability and how the disability affects the child's nutrition needs, and it must provide a medical prescription for substitute foods or texture modification. The District will not charge more than the price of the school meal, as determined by the child's eligibility status, for substitute meals or foods.

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Free or Reduced Price Lunches (National School Lunch Program) (continued)

5. The District will control the sale of the following foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV): in the food service areas during the meal periods in compliance with the timeframes and criteria meeting federal and state regulations; carbonated beverages, water ices, chewing gum, hard candy, jelly and gum candies, marshmallow candy, fondant (candy corn-type), licorice, cotton candy and candy-coated popcorn.
6. The District will ensure that potable (drinking) water will be available to students, free of charge for consumption in the place where meals are served during meal service. (New requirement under Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, U.S.C. 1751 §§203)
7. The District will notify all households of its meal charge requirements early in the school year. The District's meal charging requirements are as follows:

A charge account for students paying full or reduced price for meals may be established with the District. Students may charge no more than (three) meals. Any student failing to keep his/her account current as required by the District shall not be allowed to charge the price of further meals until the account has been paid in full (but will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received.) At least one written warning shall be provided to a student and his/her parent prior to denying meals for exceeding the District's charge limit. Payment is due to the District office on the beginning of each month. Students or parents of students may prepay meal costs.

Record Keeping

1. All currently approved and denied confidential applications for free and reduced price meals and free milk and all current direct certification documents will be maintained for three years after the current school year. Records will be maintained longer in the event of unresolved audit(s) until the audit(s) have been completed.
2. All currently approved or denied confidential applications for free and reduce price meals and free milk and all current direct certification documents will be readily retrievable by school or site and made available to state or federal reviewers upon request.
3. The District will maintain financial records that account for all revenues and expenditures of the nonprofit school nutrition and food services for a period of three years after the school year to which they pertain.

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Legal Reference: 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.
- 10-15b Duties of state board of education re feeding programs.
- 10-216 Payment of expenses.

State board of education Regulation

- 10-215b-1 School lunch and nutrition programs

P.L. 111-296 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), 42 U.S.C. 1751

7 CFR Parts 210 & 220 – Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs.

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