**WALWORTH POLICY: 761**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

**FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS**

**Application Forms/Packets**

Application forms for free and reduced meals are provided to all parent(s) or guardian(s) at the time the District holds its Back to School registration or when there is a change in eligibility. Parents or guardians enrolling a child in a school for the first time shall be provided meal application materials as part of the registration packet, regardless of the time of year the child is registered.

It is recognized that in certain cases, foster children are also eligible for these benefits. If a household has foster children living with them the foster parent/guardian may apply for such meals for these children.

The application packet shall include a letter that informs parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the food programs available and the eligibility guidelines for free and reduced price meals.

Application packets can be picked up at school during regular school hours, mailed upon request, or downloaded from the District's website.

**Review of Applications**

The Food Service Clerk has authority to review applications and make determinations of eligibility using criteria established in this policy and administrative regulations and using all relevant State and Federal guidelines.

Interested parents or guardians are responsible for filling out the applications and returning it to the District for review.

Parents or guardians will be promptly notified of the acceptance or denial of their applications. Children will be served meals immediately upon the establishment of their eligibility.

All children from an eligible household will receive the same benefits.

**Application Denial**

When an application is rejected, parents or guardians will be provided written notification which shall include: 1) the reason for the denial of benefits, e.g., income in excess of allowable limits or incomplete application; 2) notification of the right to appeal; 3) instructions on how to appeal; and, 4) a statement reminding parents that they may reapply for free and reduced price benefits at any time during the school year. The

reasons for ineligibility shall be properly documented and retained on file with the office of the Food Service Clerk.

**Assurances**

The District Administrator will monitor assurance that there is no physical segregation of, nor any other discrimination against, any child because of his/her inability to pay the full price of the meal.

Names of the 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, tickets or any other means.

Children eligible for free or reduced price meals shall not be required to: 1) work for their meals; 2) use a separate lunchroom; 3) go through a separate serving line; 4) enter the lunchroom through a separate entrance; 5) eat meals at a different time; 6) eat a meal different from the one sold to children paying the full price.

**Program Recordkeeping**

The Food Service Clerk shall:

a) maintain a summary of verification efforts;

b) maintain a file of all applications (approved or denied) and/or authorizations for a

period of three (3) years;

c) maintain a record of the total number of applications on file on or after October

1st of each year;

d) maintain a record of the percentage or number of applications verified;

e) maintain a system of collecting payments from paying children and accounting

for free and reduced price meals in a manner which will protect the anonymity of children receiving free or reduced price meals;

f) verify submission of a public/press release containing both the free and

reduced price eligibility guidelines and all other information outlined in the parent letter, to the local news media, local unemployment offices and major employers contemplating or experiencing large layoffs.

**Fair Hearing Procedures**

The District Administrator will implement a fair hearing procedure under which a family can appeal a decision made by the Food Service Clerk with respect to the family's free and reduced price meal application.

During the appeal and hearing, the child who was determined to be eligible based on the face of the application submitted will continue to receive free or reduced price meals.

Prior to initiating the hearing procedure, the District Administrator, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may request a conference to provide an opportunity to discuss the situation, present information, obtain an explanation of data submitted in the application and the decisions rendered. Such a conference shall not in any way prejudice nor diminish the right to a fair hearing.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. In connection with students, no student shall be unlawfully denied access to or the rights and benefits of the food service program.

Walworth Jt. District #1 does not discriminate on admissions to any school, class, program, or activity on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, learning, emotional, or mental disability. All discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established procedures.

**LEGAL REFERENCES:** Sections 120.10 (16) Wisconsin Statutes

120.13 (6) & (10)

PI 9.03 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code

**CROSS REFERENCE:** 760 Food Service Management

762 School Meal Charge

Administrative Regulations 762 School Meal Charge

**POLICY ADOPTED:** April 27, 1992

**POLICY REVISED:** March 18, 2002

December 18, 2012

November 27, 2017