

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (REGULATION)

Free and Reduced Meals

The board recognized the need for all children to have a nutritious breakfast and lunch. In order to assure that children receive these meals, the district will provide free or reduced-price meals for all economically disadvantaged children in accordance with family income standards as established by the federal government and the school cafeteria manager who will determine eligibility. The criteria used for determining a student's needs and the steps taken to secure the free and reduced meals will be clearly established and made known to all lunchroom staff. Students participating in such meals will not be distinguished in any way from other students. Confidentiality will be expected in each case.

Deposit of Monies

All money collected from payment for school meals shall be deposited in the school lunch fund.

In accordance with the policy of the board of education, the following regulation shall govern the comprehensive nutrition programs in this school district.

School Cafeterias

1. Any student may eat in the school cafeteria or other designated place.
2. Students may bring or otherwise provide their own lunch. Milk or other beverages may be purchased in the dining hall, if desired. These students may eat their lunch in the school cafeteria or a designated area. Vending machine ("junk food") items shall not be consumed in the dining hall.
3. Meal prices will be established by the superintendent and food service supervisor, with the approval of the board of education, at the beginning of each year.
4. Meal prices will be conspicuously posted in each cafeteria.
5. A guest must be cleared through the food service supervisor by his/her host to be eligible to eat in the cafeteria.
6. Use of dining room facilities by nondistrict organizations or individuals must have approval of the superintendent.
7. The food service supervisor will develop in-service training programs, approved by the superintendent, for the food service staff.
8. Under federal law, a school that operates on a commodity program is prohibited from serving free meals to any adult, including employees of the district.
9. Qualifications for free and reduced-price lunches will vary annually in accordance with the annual eligibility schedule.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, REGULATION (Cont.)Definitions

1. **Competitive foods** means any food or drink sold in competition with the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program in food service areas during the meal periods.
2. **Dietary Guidelines for Americans** means the current set of recommendations of the federal government that are designed to help people choose diets that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support active lives, and reduce chronic disease risks.
3. **Nutrition education** means a planned sequential instructional program that provides knowledge and teaches skills to help students adopt and maintain lifelong healthy eating habits.
4. **Foods of minimal nutritional value** means:
 - A. In the case of artificially sweetened foods, a food that provides less than five percent of the Reference Daily Intakes (RDI) for each of eight specified nutrients per serving; and
 - B. In the case of all other foods, a food that provides less than five percent of the RDI for each of eight specified nutrients per 100 calories and less than five percent of the RDI for each of eight specified nutrients per serving. The eight nutrients to be assessed for this purpose are protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamine, calcium, and iron.
 - C. Food that is classified into four categories:
 - Carbonated soft drinks
 - Chewing gum
 - Water ices
 - Certain candies made predominately from sweeteners such as hard candy, licorice, jellybeans, gumdrops, marshmallows, fondant, cotton candy, and candy-coated popcorn
5. **Food service area** means any area on school premises where child nutrition program meals are both served and eaten, as well as any areas in which such meals are either served or eaten.
6. **Meal period** means the period(s) during which breakfast or lunch meals are served and eaten, and as identified on the school schedule.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by research and be consistent with state and local district health education standards. Nutrition education at all levels of the district's curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, the following essential components designed to help students learn:

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, REGULATION (Cont.)

1. Age-appropriate nutritional knowledge, including the benefits of healthy eating; essential nutrients; nutritional deficiencies; principles of healthy weight management; the use and misuse of dietary supplements; safe food preparation, handling, and storage; and cultural diversity related to food and eating;
2. Age-appropriate nutrition-related skills, including, but not limited to, planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and
3. How to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.

In order to reinforce and support district nutrition education efforts, the building principal is responsible for ensuring:

1. Nutrition instruction is closely coordinated with the school's nutrition and food services operation and other components of the school health program to reinforce messages on healthy eating and includes social learning techniques. To maximize classroom time, nutrition concepts shall be integrated into the instruction of other subject areas where possible;
2. Links with nutrition service providers (e.g., qualified public health and nutrition professionals) are established to provide screening, referral, and counseling for nutritional problems; inform families about supplemental nutritional services available in the community (e.g., food stamps, local food pantries, summer food services program, child and adult care food program); and implement nutrition education and promotion activities for school staff, board members, and parents;

Nutrition and Food Services Operation

In order to support the school's nutrition and food services operation as an essential partner in the educational mission of the district and its role in the district's comprehensive nutrition program, the building principal is responsible for ensuring:

1. The school encourages all students to participate in the school's child nutrition program meal opportunities.
2. The school notifies families of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and encourages eligible families to apply.
3. The school's child nutrition program maintains the confidentiality of students and families applying for or receiving free or reduced-price meals [or free milk] in accordance with the National School Lunch Act.
4. The school's child nutrition program operates to meet nutrition standards in accordance with the Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act of 1994, as amended, and with applicable state laws and regulations.
5. The school sells or serves varied and nutritious food choices consistent with the applicable federal government Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
6. Food prices set by the district are communicated to students and parents. District pricing strategies will encourage students to purchase full meals and nutritious items.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, REGULATION (Cont.)

7. Procedures are in place for providing to families, on request, information about the ingredients and nutritional value of the foods served.
8. The district will provide substitute foods to students with disabilities upon written parental permission and a medical statement by a physician that identifies the student's disability, states why the disability restricts the student's diet, identifies the major life activity affected by the disability, and states the food(s) to be omitted and the food or choice of foods that must be substituted.
9. Food service equipment and facilities meet applicable local and state standards concerning health; safe food preparation, handling, and storage; drinking water; sanitation; and workplace safety.
10. Students are provided adequate time and space to eat meals in a pleasant and safe environment. School dining areas will be reviewed to ensure:
 - A. Tables and chairs are of the appropriate size for students;
 - B. Seating is not overcrowded;
 - C. Students have a relaxed environment;
 - D. Noise is not allowed to become excessive;
 - E. Rules for safe behavior are consistently enforced;
 - F. Tables and floors are cleaned between meal periods;
 - G. The physical structure of the eating area is in good repair;
 - H. Appropriate supervision is provided.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value and Competitive Food Sales

In keeping with federal regulations, the district controls the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value and all competitive foods.

Accordingly the district will offer choices in vending machines from the following nutritional food items:

1. Canned fruits;
2. Fresh fruit (e.g., apples and oranges);
3. Fresh vegetables (e.g., carrots);
4. Fruit juice and vegetable juice (at least 50% full strength), and bottled water (within established district guidelines);

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, REGULATION (Cont.)

5. Low-fat crackers and cookies, such as fig bars and ginger snaps;
6. Pretzels;
7. Bread products (e.g., bread sticks, rolls, bagels, and pita bread);
8. Ready-to-eat, low-sugar cereals (e.g., granola bars made with unsaturated fat);
9. Low-fat (one percent) or skim milk;
10. Low-fat or nonfat yogurt;
11. Snack mixes of cereal and dried fruit with a small amount of nuts and seeds;
12. Raisins and other dried fruit;
13. Low-fat crackers.

(NOTE: The district may modify the list as necessary.)

Other Foods Offered or Sold

The district recognizes that federal government standards requiring schools to provide child nutrition program meals consistent with applicable Dietary Guidelines for Americans do not apply to competitive foods sold or served outside the food service areas as defined in this regulation.

Staff Development

Ongoing in-service and professional development training opportunities for staff, in the area of food nutrition, will be encouraged.

Family and Community Involvement

In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education in the schools, the building principal is responsible for ensuring:

1. Nutrition education materials and cafeteria menus are sent home with students;
2. Parents are encouraged to send healthy snacks/meals to school;
3. Families are invited to attend exhibitions of student nutrition projects or health fairs;
4. Nutrition education workshops and screening services are offered;

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, REGULATION (Cont.)

6. School staff are encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student volunteer or paid work related to nutrition, as appropriate.

Program Evaluation

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the school health program in promoting healthy eating and to implement program changes as necessary to increase its effectiveness, the building principal is responsible for ensuring:

1. Board policy and this regulation are implemented as written;
2. All building, grade-level nutrition education curricula and materials are assessed for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with state and local district educational goals and standards;
3. Nutrition education is provided throughout the student's school years as part of the district's age-appropriate, comprehensive nutrition program;
4. Teachers deliver nutrition education through age-appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities that include social learning strategies and activities; and
5. Families and community organizations are involved, to the extent practicable, in nutrition education.