

POLICY GUIDE

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School Nutrition Programs ~~Free and Reduced Rate Meals~~

Jul 15

[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 96 and 206]

8540 **SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS** ~~FREE AND REDUCED RATE MEALS~~

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of a child receiving a nutritious, well-balanced meal to promote sound eating habits, to foster good health and academic achievement, and to reinforce the nutrition education taught in the classroom. Therefore, the Board of Education may participate in the school nutrition programs of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture in accordance with the eligibility criteria of the program. These programs may include the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the After-School Snack Program, and the Special Milk Program. ~~of good nutrition to each student's educational performance and directs that needy students be provided with lunch~~

~~Optional~~

~~[and breakfast]~~

~~at reduced rates or free of charge.~~

The Board of Education shall sign an Agreement with the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture for every school nutrition program operated within the school district. Any child nutrition program operated within the school district shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement and all the requirements of the program.

Students may ~~shall~~ be eligible for free or reduced ~~rate~~ pricing ~~meals who would not otherwise receive proper nourishment~~ in accordance with the requirements of the program operating in the school district. Prices charged to paying children shall be established by the Board of Education, but must be within the maximum prices established by the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Prices charged to adults shall be in accordance with the requirements of the program.



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~~The Board designates the _____ to determine, in accordance with standards issued annually by the State Department of Education, the students eligible for free or reduced rate meals.~~

The Superintendent **or designee** shall annually notify **all parents of all children interested persons** in the school district of the availability, eligibility requirements, and application procedures for free **or and** reduced ~~rate~~ **price** meals **or free milk in accordance with the notification requirements and procedures of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture** by the distribution of an application for such meals to the family of each student enrolled in the district, by placing a notice in the Board's official newspaper, and by informing appropriate municipal agencies and community organizations.

The Superintendent will designate in the annual notification to parents, the person who will determine, in accordance with standards issued by the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, a student's eligibility for free or reduced price meals or free milk depending on the programs operated in the school district.

A parent(s) or legal guardian(s) who ~~se~~ **may** requests **a household application and instructions from the Principal of their child's school** ~~shall be given an application form and at least two weeks to prepare and submit the form.~~ **A household application must be completed before eligibility is determined.** Where necessary, the Principal or ~~the Principal's~~ designee shall assist the applicant in the preparation of the **household application form**.

Applications shall be reviewed in a timely manner. An eligibility determination will be made, the family will be notified of its status, and the status will be implemented as soon as possible within ten operating days of the receipt of the completed application. ~~The student's eligibility shall be determined and the applicant shall be notified of that determination in writing within _____ working days of the receipt of the application.~~ Any student found eligible shall be offered free or reduced **price rate** meals **or free milk immediately upon the establishment of his/her eligibility** and shall continue to receive such meals during the pendency of any inquiry regarding his/her eligibility **in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Carry-over of previous year's eligibility for students shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.**



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A denial of eligibility for free or reduced ~~price rate~~ meals ~~or free milk~~ shall be in writing and shall include the reasons for which eligibility was denied, notice of the ~~parent's applicant's~~ right to appeal the denial, ~~and~~ the procedures for ~~an~~ appeal, ~~and a statement reminding parents that they may reapply at any time during the school year.~~ Appeal procedures shall include: a hearing, ~~if requested by the parent,~~ held with reasonable promptness and ~~at the~~ convenience of the ~~parent applicant and~~ before a hearing officer other than the school official who denied the application; the ~~parent's applicant's~~ opportunity to be represented by counsel; a decision rendered promptly and in writing; and an opportunity to appeal the decision of the hearing officer to the ~~School Business Administrator/Board Secretary~~. ~~The appeal hearing will be conducted in accordance with the provisions as outlined by the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.~~

~~There shall be no overt identification of any child(ren) who may be eligible to receive free or reduced price school meals or free milk.~~ The identity of students who receive free or reduced ~~price rate~~ meals will be protected. ~~and they~~ ~~Eligible students~~ shall not be required to work in consideration for receiving such meals ~~or milk.~~ ~~Eligible children shall not be required to use a separate dining area, go through a separate serving line, enter the dining area through a separate entrance, or consume their meals or milk at a different time. A student's eligibility status will not be disclosed at any point in the process of providing free or reduced price meals or free milk in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.~~

~~The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary or designee will verify applications of those eligible for free or reduced price meals in accordance with the requirements of the, Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.~~

~~The Board of Education will comply with all the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture Local Education Agency (LEA) Agreement and all requirements outlined in the School Nutrition Electronic Application Reimbursement System (SNEARS).~~



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Rate Meals

~~The Superintendent shall develop regulations to implement this policy and shall seek out and apply for such Federal, State, and local funds as may be applied to the district's program of free and reduced rate meals.~~

7 C.F.R. 210.1 et seq.
N.J.S.A. 18A:33-5; 18A:58-7.2
N.J.A.C. 2:36

Adopted:
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