

Operational Services

Free and Reduced-Price Food Services

Notice

The Superintendent shall be responsible for implementing the District's free and reduced-price food services policy and all applicable programs.

Eligibility Criteria and Selection of Children

A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Notification

At the beginning of each school year, by letter, the District shall notify students and their parents/guardians of: (1) eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price food service; (2) the application process; (3) the name and telephone number of a contact person for the program; and (4) other information required by federal law. The Superintendent shall provide the same information to: (1) informational media, the local unemployment office, and any major area employers contemplating layoffs; and (2) the District's website (if applicable), all school newsletters, or students' registration materials. Parents/guardians enrolling a child in the District for the first time, any time during the school year, shall receive the eligibility information.

Nondiscrimination Assurance

The District shall avoid publicly identifying students receiving free or reduced-price meals and shall use methods for collecting meal payments that prevent identification of children receiving assistance.

Appeal

A family may appeal the District's decision to deny an application for free and reduced-price food services or to terminate such services as outlined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 C.F.R. §245.7, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools. The Superintendent shall establish a hearing procedure for adverse eligibility decisions and provide by mail a copy of them to the family. The District may also use these procedures to challenge a child's continued eligibility for free or reduced-price meals or milk.

During an appeal, students previously receiving food service benefits shall not have their benefits terminated. Students who were denied benefits shall not receive benefits during the appeal.

The Superintendent shall keep on file for a period of three years a record of any appeals made and the hearing record. The District shall also maintain accurate and complete records showing the data and method used to determine the number of eligible students served free and reduced-price food services. These records shall be maintained for three years.

Unpaid Meal Charges

1. If a student is unable to pay for a meal at the time of service, he/she will be allowed to carry up to negative \$25.00 balance. He/she will be served a reimbursable meal. If a student is still unable to pay and has reached the negative \$25.00 balance he/she will be offered an alternative meal for up to 3 days. The alternate lunch will consist of peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a vegetable, and milk. An alternate lunch will be available for students with peanut allergies
2. When students are unable to pay for their meal services, meal charges will apply per a student's eligibility category and will be processed by the District accordingly.

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3. Free/reduced forms can be found at www.riverbendschools.net or contact the Cafeteria Manager at 815-589-2911.
4. The Cafeteria Manager will notify households if their student is getting close to the negative \$25.00 balance. Push Coin sends daily emails updating parents on the student's purchases and balances. The Cafeteria Manager will also email and/or call parents regarding negative balances.
5. If negative balances go unpaid, the Cafeteria Manager can set up a payment plan.
6. The Cafeteria Manager will be responsible for managing the charges. If you have questions, you may contact the Cafeteria Manager at 815-589-2911.
7. If a student's account is overdrawn at the end of the year, the family will receive a monthly statement allowing for payment. This statement will be emailed to the family. A Student's negative balance will be transferred to the next school year. The balance will be due at registration.

LEGAL REF.: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, National School Lunch Program, 7 C.F.R. Part 210.

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools, 7 C.F.R. Part 245.

105 ILCS 125/ and 126/.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §305.10 et seq.