

**Free or Reduced Price Lunches (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 The names of children eligible to receive free meals shall not be published, posted, or announced in any manner; and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets, or by any other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.

*Note: An optional approach, the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible schools to provide free meals to all students at no charge, regardless of family income. To qualify, at least 40 percent of a school's population must be identified as low income children who meet criteria for free school meals. Instead of collecting individual applications for free and reduced price meals, CEP uses information from other programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Temporary Assistance Program for Needy Families.*

(cf. 3542.43 - Charging Policy)

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.

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)

Approved: April 21, 2020

NORTH CANAAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

North Canaan, Connecticut

**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 free and reduced meals. 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 and reduced meals 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 release containing this same information will be made available on the school's website. 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 meals 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 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 or reduced price meals that have been denied may be appealed to the Superintendent.
5. Records of students receiving assistance will be kept in each school. A monthly report is generated and kept in the main office.
6. Annually the District will establish prices for reimbursable student meals. The price charged to students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals will be established annually 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.)***
7. The price charged to students who qualify for reduced price meals will be established annually by the District 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 free and reduced meals 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.

**C. Direct Certification by the State of Connecticut**

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 benefits and the household fails to submit a confidential application, the Superintendent or designee may complete an application for the student documenting how s/he 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. Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals are eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) and will be charged "paid" meal prices set by the District. "Paid" category students will be treated equally to students receiving free or reduced price benefits in every aspect of the District's NSLP and SBP.

12. 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.

13. In the event of major employers contemplating large layoffs in the attendance area of the district, the district will provide confidential applications and eligibility criteria for free and reduced price meals to the employer for distribution to affected employees.

### **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 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.
4. The District will use the offer versus serve option when serving NSLP lunches. Students must take at least three of five food items including one-half cup of fruit or vegetable offered in program lunches. Students must select the other food component in the quantities planned.
5. The District will use the offer versus serve option when serving program breakfasts to students. Students must take at least three of four food items including one-half cup of fruit or vegetable offered in program breakfasts. Students must select the other food component in the quantities planned.

### **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 or SBP 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.

5. 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)

6. North Canaan Elementary School notifies all households of its meal charge policy early in the school year. The policy is located on the school's webpage. An account for each registered student is created in the meal program. Parents may prepay for meals or pay daily. The District (North Canaan Elementary School) will allow meals to be charged to a negative account. If money is owed on a student account, email notification will be sent home the day the account becomes overdrawn, and each day that it remains overdrawn. Paper notification will be sent home at the end of the school week, indicating the amount due, and our Principal will be notified. Payment is expected the following Monday, or the first day of the new school week. Payment should include the past due amount, and funds to cover the current week's meals. Other notification of negative balances may be used at our discretion. If payment is not received at the beginning of the following week, students may be served an alternate meal consisting of a cheese sandwich, a piece of fruit, and milk. They may not be eligible for the main meal option or any side dishes. Account balances (including negative balances) will be carried over to the next school year.

7. The sale of foods (other than Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value-FMNV) in competition with the District's lunch (NSLP) or breakfast (SBP) programs will be allowed in dining sites during lunch and breakfast periods with Board approval only when all income from the food sales accrues to the benefit of the District's nutrition and food services or accrues to a school or student organization approved by the Board.

8. The District will not use nutrition and food services funds to purchase FMNV for sale unless the proceeds from the sale of those foods is deposited into the Nutrition and Food Services account in an amount sufficient to cover all direct and indirect costs relating to the purchase and service of the foods.

### **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 reduced price meals 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.

(cf. 3542.43 - Charging Policy)

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)

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