

ATTACHMENT 3
Food Services Department
Marketing the National School Lunch Program
and Non-Payment of Meals and Collection Procedures
2017/2018

It has been determined through numerous published studies that student nutrition plays a key role in the education process. Children need to be well nourished in order to learn effectively. Food Services will make every effort to ensure that any student who qualifies for Free and Reduced price meals through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs has access to a nutritious, balanced hot meal. While it is the goal of Food Services to feed every eligible student, the department cannot sustain the cost of feeding students who are not eligible and do not pay. This policy aims to feed every child responsibly, minimize uncollected cost for meals, and maximize reimbursements for qualified students.

Student meal prices for the 2017-201 school year are as follows:

- Breakfast: Paid \$1.00
 Reduced \$0.25
- Lunch: Paid \$2.00
 Reduced \$0.40

Applying for the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Programs:

- Households may apply by turning in an application for the 2017-2018 school year through the following avenues:
 - Paper applications may be turned into the District Office, school site, cafeteria, or Food Services office.
 - Applications may be mailed to the District Office, Attn. Food Services, 4161 W. 147th St, Lawndale, CA 90260
 - Apply online at: www.schoolcafe.com
 - Food Services is not responsible for lost applications. The student's parent/guardian must follow up if they don't receive a response with 10 days of application submission by calling 310-973-1300 Ext. 50051.

Advertise Free and Reduced Program

- Applications mailed home over the summer to enrolled students
- District messaging system used to remind households to turn in the application (3- beginning, middle and end of September)
- District messaging system used to remind households that have not submitted an application that they need to re-apply for the meal program or lose services (weekly phone call).
- Once the majority of applications are processed, but no later than October 15, 2017, another application will be sent to those households that have not applied.
- The District's message system is used to phone and email all ineligible households that students must have sufficient funds or a qualified application on file, otherwise students that come into the cafeteria will be given fruit (or an acceptable substitute) or muffin, and milk or soy milk, if there is an allergy issue, as a courtesy. The student can also visit the salad bar. This is a non-reimbursable meal and the cost will be absorbed by a non-Federal funding source (General Fund).

In order to end the practice of using cafeteria meal accounts as credit accounts, the District will employ the tactful process outlined below:

Non-payment of meals procedures:

Non-Payment of Meals Procedure – Once a student meal account balance exceeds \$15, the child will be given fruit (or an acceptable substitute) or muffin and milk or soy milk, if there is an allergy issue, as a courtesy “free of charge.” The student can also visit the salad bar. Households will be notified via phone,

mail and/or email when balances exceed the \$5 threshold and again at \$10. This is designed to put the household on notice that the \$15 limit is approaching and the student is in jeopardy of being denied access to a full meal.

Once the \$15 threshold is passed, the student will be given a pre-printed note stating that the student meal account has insufficient funds and has exhausted the allowable dollar amount. A phone call, letter and/or email will be sent to the household communicating the situation and requesting payment or a home lunch for the student. The household will be encouraged to fill out an application with every communication to get the student enrolled in the programs.

- **Repeated incidents:** If students are repeatedly running out of funds, the matter will be referred to the site principal and/or Student Support Services.
- **Balance reminders:** Student balances will be made available to parents via www.schoolcafe.com, through a weekly phone call using District messaging system, and through mailings, as necessary. Those using SchoolCafe have the option to set up an automated reminder which is triggered when the meal account reaches a value specified by the household. Though SchoolCafe does take deposits, households do not have to make payments online in order to register and monitor their student's meal account. Households may create an account for the sole purpose of monitoring student accounts.
- **Deposits:** Funds can be deposited into a child's account at the Food Services Office located at Will Rogers Middle School, at the student's respective school cafeteria, or online at www.schoolcafe.com.

Benefits of policy enforcement:

- Helps parents by ensuring that balances remain manageable.
- Households will be responsive and apply early and increase meal reimbursements by qualifying more eligible students.
- Free and Reduced percentages will reflect actual household demographics. Resources/funds allocated based on these percentages may increase.
- Establishes a consistent policy for all.
- Removes end of year financial burden on schools and unexpected balances for parents.

Payment Plan: a payment plan will be made available through Food Services. A spreadsheet will be used to create payment plans for households that make the request, and will be maintained by the Food Services Clerk Typist, Alice Garcia.