

Free and Reduced-Price Food Services and Waiver of Student Fees

Section A - Introduction

It is the policy of the Board of Education to offer free and reduced-price meals and other appropriate student fee waivers to students of low income families. To this end, the Board shall maintain a student financial assistance program for which families can apply on an annual or as needed basis.

Section B - Eligibility Criteria

A student's eligibility for free and reduced benefits including free and reduced price meals shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines and family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The superintendent or designee shall also have the authority to approve eligibility for free and reduced benefits in extenuating circumstances such as a significant loss of income due to severe illness or injury in the family or unusual expenses such as fire, flood, or storm damage.

Section C - Notification

At the beginning of each school year, or upon enrollment of the school district, the superintendent or designee shall notify students and their parents/guardians of:

1. Eligibility requirements for the student financial assistance program;
2. The application process;
3. The name and telephone number of a contact person for the program; and
4. Other information as required by federal law.

This information shall also be provided to parents/guardians enrolling a child in the school district for the first time, any time during the school year.

Section D - Application

In order to receive free and reduced benefits, a parent/legal guardian will need to submit a completed application for the student financial assistance program. Applications may require evidence of household size and income. A new application shall be required each school year.

Section E - Nondiscrimination Assurance

No student will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap or any other legally protected class.

No physical segregation or any other form of segregation will occur for any student because of the student's receipt of student aid.

No discrimination or punishment of any kind, including the lowering of grades or exclusion from classes, may be exercised against a student whose parents or guardians are unable to purchase instructional materials or pay required fees.

Section F - Application and Eligibility Records

School records that identify individual students as applicants for or recipients of financial assistance are subject to the Illinois School Student Records Act (105 ILCS 10). Information from such records is confidential and may be disclosed only as provided in that Act.

Further there will be no overt identification of any such students receiving financial assistance by use of special tokens or tickets or by any other means.

Section F - Items Loaned to Students

Occasionally students participating in the financial assistance program will be loaned equipment and materials at no cost, with the expectation that they are returned no later than the conclusion of the school year. Items loaned to students are to be properly cared for by the student and returned in a timely manner. Any items not returned in good condition, ordinary wear and tear excepted, may be charged to the student, at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.

Section G - Development of Procedures

The administration will develop appropriate procedures and forms for the effective implementation of this policy. The District will maintain and use a fair hearing procedure to handle any appeal to decisions of the school relative to student eligibility or correctness of information contained in the application.

Approved: February 2, 1976
Revised: October 30, 1989
Revised: January 14, 2002
Revised: September 22, 2008
Reviewed: March 19, 2012
Revised: February 28, 2022