CACHE COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Educating students for success in a changing world

Cache County School District

Policy Series 6000: Finance and Operations

Policy No. 6500 P2

Child Nutrition Administration Procedures

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that every school operates a food service program that provides students with access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn. There are numerous state and federal regulations under which the district's child nutrition department must operate. These regulations change frequently, and the district's compliance helps to ensure quality, cleanliness, fairness, efficiency, and accountability in our child nutrition program.

A. Free/Reduced Price Application Forms

District and/or Schools shall provide links to online applications for free/reduced-price meals to parents. Students qualifying for the Special Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or other applicable programs do not have to complete or submit a free/reduced-price form. The Child Nutrition Department will send households an email/letter informing parents of a student's eligibility status.

B. The child nutrition program is an essential educational and support program, and budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the district's students. The board approves student meal prices annually. The district participates in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After the Bell Breakfast Program, and other food distribution programs according to its permanent agreement with the Utah State Board of Education. When feasible, the district will sponsor additional food service programs, e.g., After School Snack Program, vending, etc., to support student education.

C. The child nutrition program will not discriminate against, nor physically segregate, any student because of his or her inability to pay the full price of a meal. Schools must ensure that all students, whether eligible to receive free or reduced price meals, or whose meal accounts have a low balance or are delinquent, are not publicly identified or stigmatized.

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D. Delinquent Accounts Procedures
   1. When a student has five meals left on their account, the lunch secretary/secretary will begin to notify the parent/guardian.
   2. Automated messages (phone call, email) will be sent to parents who have low or negative balances weekly, or more as needed.
   3. When the lunch secretary/secretary is unable to contact a parent electronically about the child's account, a mailed letter will be sent to the home.
   4. Parents may view their students' accounts online through the PowerSchool parent account or through an account that has been set up through the district's meal payment system located on the district's website.
   5. The lunch secretary/secretary shall direct communications regarding a student's meal debt only to a student's parent/guardian. School staff shall not involve students with matters related to their meal balance.
   6. All students will receive the regular meal regardless of the status of the student's meal account balance. Meals will never be taken from a student.
   7. The lunch secretary/secretary will make every effort to keep charges at a positive balance (contacting parents, mailing letters, etc.). School administrators will assist as needed.
   8. All student and adult lunch account balances must be reconciled by the end of the fiscal year.

E. Procedures for a la carte Line
   1. The middle and high schools also offer an optional "à la carte" line, which is not considered a federally reimbursed meal. This means that all students, including students who qualify for free or reduced meals, will be charged full price for items purchased in the à la carte lines.
   2. As a courtesy to parents, staff may provide students with a general notice if they have a negative balance and visit the à la carte lines. Staff may communicate with students with statements such as the following:
      - "For your account, I can only ring up a lunch right now."
      - "Right now, I can only give you a meal option."
      - "Lunch only today." (short and concise)
      - "Your parents' permission is required before purchasing à la carte."
   3. Parents have the option to block students from accessing the à la carte if desired by contacting the school lunch secretary, who will assist with that process. If parents/guardians choose to block student access to the à la carte line, parents/guardians should also discuss this with the student so they are not surprised when they can't purchase items.

4. Aside from the examples given above, all other communication regarding a student's meal debt shall be directed to the student's parent/guardian.

Legal References:
53F-2-423. School meal program.
USDA Non Discrimination Statement

Synopsis:

Last revised: July 20, 2007
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