



WOODBIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

40 Beecher Road – South
Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525

MEMORANDUM

Jonathan S. Budd, Ph.D. – Superintendent
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TO: Woodbridge Board of Education Policy Committee
FROM: Jonathan S. Budd, Ph.D., Superintendent
DATE: December 9, 2021
RE: Proposed Revision of Policy 3542.31, “Free or Reduced-Price Lunches”

Please find attached a proposed revision of Policy 3542.31 that clarifies eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price meals, and updates non-discrimination language in relation to students participating in free and reduced-price meals. The revisions align with the recommendations of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE). The proposed changes are represented in red.

Business/Non Instructional Operations

Free or Reduced-Price Lunches

Participation in the National School Lunch Program

National School Lunch Program regulations require that lunches be provided for needy students when family income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities, including food of the proper quality and amount for good nutrition. **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.**

Parents shall be informed of the district policy concerning "Free or Reduced-Price Lunches." A letter and application form will be distributed to all parents during the **first few opening** weeks of school. The letter will contain information on the eligibility standards, procedures for applying for free or reduced-price lunches, and how an appeal may be filed for an adjustment in the decision with respect to their application. This information and an application form will be provided whenever a new student is enrolled.

A public news release containing this same information will be made available to local news representatives early in the school year. Copies of this public release will be made available upon request to any interested party. 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 lunches and/or supplementary milk 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 or supplementary milk (because of race, religion, source of income, etc.).~~ The District shall ensure that, in its operation and implementation of the free and reduced-price lunch program, 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.

3. ~~The anonymity of students receiving assistance under this policy shall be protected. The names of these students will be treated in a confidential manner.~~ No child shall be physically segregated or discriminated against because of his/her inability to pay for a meal. The names of children eligible to receive free or reduced-price 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.

4. Requests for free lunches, reduced-price lunches, and/or supplementary milk which have been denied may be appealed to the Superintendent.

5. ~~Records of students receiving assistance will be kept in each school.~~

6. Eligibility for the **F**ree or **R**educed-**P**rice **L**unches program 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 that for emergency situations, will be determined on the basis of income and family size as indicated on the scale provided by the District **based on the National School Lunch Program regulations.**

7. 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.

On a case-by-case basis, when a student is known to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals (or supplementary milk) benefits and the household fails to submit a confidential application, the Superintendent or his/her designee may complete an application for the student documenting how he/she knows the household income qualifies the student for free or reduced-price meal benefits. Parents/guardians of a student approved for free or reduced-price meals benefits (or supplementary milk), when application is made for the student by a school official, will be notified of the decision and given the opportunity to decline benefits.

Legal References: 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.

[10-215b](#) Duties of State Board of Education Re: Feeding Programs.

[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.

Policy adopted: ~~February 24, 2014~~

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Woodbridge, Connecticut