

MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 33

FREE & REDUCED PRICE MEALS

The M.S.A.D. No. 33, hereinafter called the Sponsoring Agency, has entered into agreement to participate in the National School Lunch Program, and/or Breakfast Program, or Special Milk Program, and/or receive commodities donated by the United States Department of Agriculture and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced price meals or free milk to eligible children in the schools under its jurisdiction.

The Sponsoring Agency assures the State Department of Educational and Cultural Services, School Nutrition Programs, hereinafter called the SNP, that the school system will uniformly implement the following policy with respect to determining the eligibility of children for free and reduced price meals in all National School Lunch Program, and commodity-only school under its jurisdiction and to determine children's eligibility for free milk only in the Milk Only Program schools under its jurisdiction.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Sponsoring Agency agrees:

A. **FREE MEALS**

To serve meals free to children from families approved by the SNP and whose income is at or below the income level.

B. **FREE MILK - FOR MILK ONLY SCHOOLS ONLY**

To serve free milk to children from families approved by the SNP and whose income is at or below the income level for free meals.

C. **FREE MILK - FOR MILK ONLY SCHOOLS ONLY**

To serve lunch at a reduced price of \$.40 and breakfast at a reduced price of \$.25 or less to children from families approved by the SNP whose income is at or falls within the range of the income level.

D. **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

To serve free or reduced price meals or free milk to foster children in case where the welfare agency is legally responsible for the child and the annual income of the child is not above the income for free or reduced price meals of a one-member family.

To provide free or reduced price meals or free milk to those children whose parents or guardians have become unemployed, provided: the loss of income causes the family income during the period of unemployment to be within the eligibility criteria.

E. **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

That there will be no physical segregation of, or any other discrimination against, any child because of his inability to pay the full price of the meal or milk. The names of children eligible to receive free or reduced price meals or milk shall not be published, posted, or announced in any manner and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets, or by any other means. Further assurance is given that children eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk shall not be required to:

1. Work for their meals or milk.
2. Use a separate lunchroom.
3. Go through a separate serving line.
4. Enter the lunch room through a separate entrance.
5. Eat meals or drink milk at a different time.
6. Eat a different meal from the meal sold to children paying the full price of such a meal or drink milk different from that sold to children paying the full price.

F. That in the operation of school feeding programs, no child shall be discriminated against because of his race, sex, age, color, national origin, or physical or mental handicap.

G. **HEARING PROCEDURES**

To establish and use a fair hearing procedure in cases of appeal by parents of the school's decision on application and in cases where the school official challenges the correctness of information contained in an application or of the continued eligibility of any child for a free or reduced price meal or free milk. During appeal, hearing, and disposition of case, the child will receive free or reduced price meals or free milk.

To maintain, for a period of three years, records of all such appeals, challenges and dispositions.

That in initiating the hearing procedure, the parent or local school official may request a conference to provide an opportunity for the parent and school official to discuss the situation, present information, and obtain an explanation of data submitted in the application and decisions rendered. Such a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing.

That the hearing procedure shall provide:

1. A publicly announced simple method for making an oral or written request for a hearing.
2. An opportunity to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person in presenting its appeal;
3. An opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal;
4. That the hearing shall be held with reasonable promptness and convenience and that adequate notice shall be given as to the time and place of the hearing;
5. An opportunity to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting its position;
6. An opportunity to question or refute any testimony or other evidence and to confront and cross-examine and adverse witnesses;
7. That the hearing shall be conducted and the decision made by a hearing official who did not participate in making the decision under appeal or in any previous conference;
8. That the decision of the hearing official shall be based on the oral and documentary evidence presented at the hearing and made a part of the hearing record;
9. That the parties concerned and their designated representative shall be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing official;
10. That a written record shall be prepared with respect to each hearing, which shall include: the decision under appeal; any documentary evidence and a summary of any oral testimony presented at the hearing; the decision of the hearing official, including the reasons therefore and a copy of the notification to the parties concerned of the decision of the hearing official; and

11. That such written record of each hearing shall be preserved for a period of three (3) years and shall be available for examination by the parties concerned or their representative at any reasonable time and place during such period.

H. **APPROVING OFFICIAL**

To designate: (Name and Titles) _____ as the approving official(s), who shall review applications and make determinations of eligibility using the criteria outlined in this policy to determine which individual children are eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk. The Approving Officer shall sign, date and indicate action on each application, and shall notify the parent in writing, within ten (10) working days of receipt of their application.

I. **NOTICE TO PARENTS**

To send at the beginning of each school year, and whenever there is a change in eligibility criteria, to the parent or guardian of each child a letter as outlined herein, including a form on which to make application of free or reduced price meals or free milk.

J. **APPLICATIONS**

To request parents to complete the application and return it to the Approving Official (named in H) for review.

Such applications and documentation of action taken will be maintained for three years after the end of the school year to which they pertain.

To accept applications at any time during the year and to supply application to any parent enrolling a child in a school for the first time.

To transfer to and honor the eligibility of a child who transfers from one school to another under the jurisdiction of the Sponsoring Agency.

To provide all children from a family with the same benefits.

To notify parents or guardians individually in writing within the ten working days of the receipt of their applications and to serve meals or milk immediately upon the establishment of eligibility.

To inform parents in writing of reason(s) for rejection of their application and advise them of how to contact the Hearing Official

- K. That the Hearing Official will be someone other than the Approving Officer. The designated Hearing Official is:

Name, Title, Address

L. **VERIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS**

The Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services agrees to conduct a search of data available from Food Stamps and other income documentation as appropriate of household names submitted by the Local Educational Agencies for income/family size verification. This process is required of the Local Educational Agency for Program Participation in the School Breakfast Program and the School Lunch Program.

The Local Educational Agency agrees to submit for verification the information from at least 3% of the approved applications on hand September 30 each year to the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services.

M. **ANONYMITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

To establish a procedure to collect money from children who pay for their meals or milk and to account for the number for free and reduced price and full price meals served or the number of half-pints of free and full price milk served. The procedure(s) described in Attachment 4 will be used in order that no other child in the school will consciously be made aware, by such procedure, of the identity of the children receiving reduced price meals, free meals or free milk.

N. **AMENDMENTS TO POLICIES**

To submit to the SNP any alterations, or amendments to the policy including eligibility criteria, applications, public announcements, etc., for approval prior to implementation. Such changes will be effective only upon approval and all changes in eligibility criteria shall be publicly announced in the same manner used at the beginning of the school year.

O. **RECORDS**

To maintain a file of the following records for three years after the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain.

1. All applications returned and documentation of action taken.
2. Record of all appeals and challenges and their disposition.
3. All notifications of eligibility determinations.

P. **ATTACHMENTS**

The following attachments are adopted with and considered part of this policy:

Attachment 1 - Letter to parents announcing policy and eligibility criteria;

Attachment 2 - Application form and criteria for determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk.

Attachment 3 - Application 3 Notification of eligibility determination;

Attachment 4 - Collection procedures for protecting the anonymity of free and reduced price meals or free milk recipients.

Q. **PUBLIC RELEASE**

To notify any major employers contemplating large layoffs in the area of the eligibility criteria for free and reduced price meals.

R. **80% REGULATION**

To collect applications biannually on the following schools with 80% or more of the attending students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals during March 1984; to collect applications tri-annually on the following schools that elect to serve all children in that school free meals and pay for the meals for non-needy children from sources other than Federal Fund:

Code:EFBC

Dr. Levesque School

Wisdom High School

Filed for:

Board of Directors Maine School
Administrative District No. 33

School Committee or Board of
Directors, SAD #33

By: Superintendent of Schools

August 8, 1984

Approved By:

State Dept. of
Ed. & Cultural Services

Director, School
Nutrition Programs
Sept. 10, 1984