

## FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEAL SERVICES

The Board of Education recognizes that the nutrition of district students is an important factor in their educational progress. The Board therefore shall participate in federally funded school lunch programs, and shall provide free [or reduced price] **meal** services to qualified district students.

The district will post the 800 number on its website for anyone interested in locating the nearest summer food service program.

### Availability, Application & Notification

Notice of the availability of the free [and reduced price] meal programs will be sent to the homes of students, local media, the local unemployment office and large employers experiencing layoffs in the area from which the district draws its attendance. Any child who is a member of a family unit whose income is below the federally established scale shall be eligible to receive such services.

To apply for the free [or reduced price] meal program:

- a. Application forms will be available in the main office of each school building **and on the district web site**, and can be completed and submitted at any time during the year.
- b. Completed forms must be submitted to the **District Director of Food Services** prior to any determination of eligibility.
- c. The parent or guardian will be informed of the **District Director of Food Services'** determination within one week of receiving a properly completed application.

Applications will be kept confidential.

**If verification activities fail to confirm eligibility for free or reduced price benefits or should the household fail to cooperate with verification efforts, the school district shall reduce or terminate benefits, applicable, as follows:**

**Ten (10) day advance notification shall be provided to households that are to receive a reduction or termination of benefits, prior to the actual reduction or termination. The first day of the ten (10) day advance notice period shall be the day the notice is sent. The notice shall advise the household of:**

	<b>Approved:</b>	03/11/2015
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> reading</b> (revised)(renumbered from 3546.1):		03/11/2015
<b>1<sup>st</sup> reading</b> (revised)(renumbered from 3546.1):		02/04/2015
	Adopted:	08/02/2006
	2 <sup>nd</sup> reading:	08/02/2006
	1 <sup>st</sup> reading:	07/11/2006
		11/04/1981

- a. **The change;**
- b. **The reasons for the change;**
- c. **Notification of the right to appeal and when the appeal must be filed to ensure continued benefits while awaiting a hearing and decision;**
- d. **Instructions on how to appeal; and**
- e. **The right to reapply at any time during the school year. The reasons for ineligibility shall be properly documented and retained on file at the school district.**

Upon written request, the **Superintendent of Schools** will hear appeals of determinations regarding such services in compliance with federal regulations governing the National School Lunch Program **and the hearing procedure set forth below:**

Hearing Procedure When Eligibility is Denied or Continued Eligibility Challenged

The following procedures will be used:

1. The applicant or school official may notify the hearing official by calling or writing to make a request for a hearing;
2. The family shall have an opportunity to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person of their choice in presenting its appeal;
3. The litigants shall have an opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal;
4. The hearing shall be held with reasonable promptness and convenience to the family and adequate notice shall be given to the family as to the time and place of the hearing;
5. The litigants shall have an opportunity to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting its position without undue interference;
6. The litigants shall have an opportunity to questions or refute any testimony or other evidence and to confront and cross-examine any adverse witnesses;
7. The hearing shall be conducted and the decision made by a hearing officer who did not participate in making the decision under appeal or in any previous conference;
8. The decisions of the hearing official shall be based only on the oral and documentary evidence presented at the hearing and made a part of the hearing records;
9. The family and any designated representative shall be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing official;
- 10. A written record shall be prepared with respect to each hearing, which shall include the challenge or 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;**
11. Any written record of each hearing shall be preserved for a period of six (6) years and shall be available for examination by the family or its representative at any reasonable time and place during such period.

If a challenge to correctness of information contained in an application or to the continued eligibility of any child for a free or reduced price meal (and/or free special milk) is made on the part of the School Food Authority, **benefits shall be continued as follows while the household awaits the hearing and decision:**

1. **Households that have been approved for benefits and that are subject to a reduction or termination of benefits later in the same school year shall receive continued benefits if they appeal the adverse action within the ten (10) day advance notice period; and**
2. **Households that are denied benefits upon application shall not receive benefits**

In addition, in order to reach students who are **categorically** eligible for free [and reduced price] meals and to comply with state law, three times per school year the **District Director of Food Services** will review the list made available by the State Education Department of children ages three to 18 who are in households receiving federal food assistance, **Medicaid benefits (for certain recipients)**, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to identify students within the district. The district will send a notice to those families apprising them of their student's eligibility to participate in the school meal programs without further application. Parents may decline participation by informing the district in writing. If the service is declined, the student will be removed from the eligibility list.

Children who have been determined to be homeless, migrant or runaway, or in foster care can be directly certified to participate in the District free and reduced price meal program. The Director of Special Education and Pupil Services or the District Homeless Liaison will provide a System to Track and Account for Children (STAC) form to the Director of Food Services. The Director of Food Services will then directly certify these students to receive free lunch.

The Building Principal in conjunction with **Director of Food Services** will establish meal time procedures that both protect the anonymity of the student and allow for proper accounting.

### **Community Eligibility**

**If the district can show that the percentage of students eligible for free school meals at any one school, or group of schools, or the entire school district, is at least 40%, the district may elect for the school, schools, or district to participate in the Community Eligibility option. Pursuant to federal law and regulations, the school would provide all students at that school or schools with free breakfast and lunch, pursuant to federal regulations. The district would receive federal reimbursement corresponding to the percentage of eligible students. If the reimbursement received by the district is not sufficient to cover total nonprofit school food service program costs, non-federal funds must be used to pay the difference.**

Pursuant to federal regulations, under the Community Eligibility option, student eligibility is based on household receipt of food assistance (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)), income assistance (TANF), or Medicaid benefits (for certain income levels), student participation in Head Start, or recognition of the student as homeless, runaway, migrant, or in foster care.

All affected households will receive prior notification that the school is operating under the Community Eligibility provision.

Participating Schools and Collection Methods Employed

The following schools will participate in the National School Lunch Program in the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District and the collection methods used will be the roster system and the Winsnap Computer Program:

Schools

1. Grand Avenue Middle School
2. Merrick Avenue Middle School
3. Sanford H. Calhoun High School
4. John F. Kennedy High School
5. Wellington C. Mepham High School

Cross-ref: 8500, Food Service Management

Ref: National School Lunch Act of 1946, as amended, (42 U.S.C. §§1751-1760)  
Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, (42 USC §§1771 et seq.)  
7 CFR Part 245 (245.2, Definitions; 245.5, public announcement; 245.6, categorical eligibility and direct certification/verification.)  
Social Services Law §95(7)  
U.S. Department of Education guidance document, *The Community Eligibility Provision and Selected Requirements Under Title I*, January 2014,  
[www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/13-0381guidance.doc](http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/13-0381guidance.doc).