

CATASAUQUA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

No. 808

SECTION: Operations

TITLE: Food Services

ADOPTED: June 13, 2017

REVISED: September 11, 2018

808 – FOOD SERVICES		1
1. Purpose	The Board recognizes that students require adequate, nourishing food and beverages in order to grow, learn, and maintain good health. The Board directs that students shall be provided with adequate time and space to eat meals during the school day.	2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Authority	The food service program shall be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, as well as federal guidelines established by the Child Nutrition Division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
School Code §§ 504, 807.1, 1335, 1337; 42 USC § 1751 <i>et seq.</i> ; 2 CFR Part 200; 7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220		18 19 20 21
FNS Instruction 113-1	The District shall ensure that, in the operation of the food service program, no student, staff member, or other individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.	22 23 24 25 26
School Code § 504; 42 USC § 1760	Food sold by the District at its schools may be purchased by students and District employees, but only for consumption on school premises. The price charged to students shall be established annually by the District in compliance with federal and state laws.	27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34
42 USC § 1760	Nonprogram food shall be priced to generate sufficient revenues to cover the cost of such items. A “nonprogram food” shall be defined as a food or beverage, other than a reimbursable meal or snack, that is sold at the school and is purchased using funds from the child nutrition account. Nonprogram foods include, but are not limited to, adult meals and à la carte items. All revenue from the sale of nonprogram food shall accrue to the child nutrition program account.	35 36 37 38 39 40
3. Delegation of Responsibility	The operation and supervision of the food service program shall be the responsibility of the Food Service Director. The Food Service Director shall present to the Board each month for its approval a statement of receipts and expenditures for cafeteria funds.	39 40
School Code § 504		40

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School Code §§
504, 1337

Cafeterias shall be operated on a nonprofit basis. A periodic review of the cafeteria accounts shall be made by the Food Service Director, the Business Supervisor, and/or the auditor.

School Code §§
504, 1337; 42
USC § 1751 *et*
seq.; 7 CFR Parts
210, 215, 220

The Food Service Director shall ensure that school meals meet the standards required by the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.

3 Pa. Cons. Stat.
§ 5713; 42 USC
§1758(h); 7 CFR
§§ 210.13,
210.31

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall comply with state and federal requirements for conducting cafeteria health and safety inspections and ensuring employee participation in appropriate inspection services and training programs.

4. Guidelines

A. *In General.*

To reinforce the District’s commitment to nutrition and student wellness, foods served in the school cafeteria shall:

1. Be carefully selected to contribute to students’ nutritional well-being and health.
2. Meet the nutrition standards specified in law and regulations and approved by the Board.
3. Be prepared by methods that will retain nutritive quality, appeal to students, and foster lifelong healthy eating habits.
4. Be served in age-appropriate quantities, at reasonable prices.

Policy 119

The District shall use USDA Foods for school menus available under the Child Nutrition USDA Foods Programs.

B. *Funds and Accounts.*

School Code §
504

All funds derived from the operation, maintenance, or sponsorship of the food service program shall be deposited in the separate cafeteria fund, a special bank account, in the same manner as other District funds. Such funds shall be expended in the manner approved and directed by the Board, but no account shall be transferred from the cafeteria fund to any other account or fund, *except* that District advances to the food service program may be returned to the District’s general fund from any surplus resulting from the operation of the food service program. Surplus accounts shall be used only for the improvement and maintenance of the food service program.

Policies 610, 634

C. *Procurement.*

Procurement of goods or services for the food service program shall meet the requirements of applicable law, regulations, and Board policy and procedures.

42 USC § 1758;
7 CFR Part 245

D. *Free/Reduced-Price Meals.*

The District shall provide free and reduced-price meals to students in accordance with the terms and conditions of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, and the District shall inform parents/guardians of the availability of such meals and provide them with information about applying for such meals.

7 CFR § 15b.40;
Policies 103, 128

E. *Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs.*

The District shall make appropriate food service and/or meal accommodations to students with special dietary needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

42 USC §
1758(h); 7 CFR
§§ 210.13, 220.7

F. *School Food Safety Inspections.*

The District shall obtain two (2) safety inspections per year in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The District shall post the most recent inspection report and release a copy of the report to members of the public, upon request.

42 USC §
1758(h); 7 CFR
Parts 210, 220

G. *School Food Safety Program.*

The District shall comply with federal requirements in developing a food safety program that enables District schools to take systematic action to prevent or minimize the risk of foodborne illness among students.

7 CFR §§ 210.9,
210.13, 220.7

The District shall maintain proper sanitation and health standards in food storage, preparation, and service, in accordance with applicable state and local laws and regulations, and federal food safety requirements.

42 USC §§ 1751
et seq., 1773; 7
CFR § 210.31

H. *Professional Standards for Food Service Personnel.*

The District shall comply with the professional standards for school food service personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. For purposes of this policy, professional standards include hiring standards for new food service program directors and annual continuing education/training for all individuals involved in the operation and administration of school meal programs. Such professional standards shall apply to both District-operated food service programs and contracted food service programs.

I. *School Meal Accounts.*

Individual accounts shall be assigned to each student for accounting purposes for the purchase of meals served in school cafeterias.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop and disseminate administrative regulations that establish procedures to control school meal accounts. Administrative regulations should include the following, consistent with Part J below:

1. Procedures for collecting money for individual student accounts which ensure that the identity of each student is protected.
2. Method in which parents/guardians and high school students are notified when a student's account reaches a specified level or when a student owes money for a certain number of school meals.
3. Procedures for providing students with meals when the student forgets or loses his/her money or when his/her account has insufficient funds.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, and employees concerning the contents of this Policy and applicable administrative regulations, including information relating to nondiscrimination.

Parents/guardians are responsible for all charges on their child's account.

J. *District Procedures for Meal Accounts.*

1. Family Fiscal Responsibility.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the school food service program and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances. This includes addressing negative school meal account balances (meal charges), bounced check fees, and school meal accounts with credit balances.

The District aims to implement an enforceable and effective meal charging procedure that treats students with respect and dignity, maintains a positive experience for students during lunch service, establishes age appropriate practices, promotes parent responsibility for meal payments, and self-responsibility of the student.

It is the parents' (or guardian's) responsibility to read and understand all communications regarding the school meal program related to procedures for applying for free/reduced meals, school meal charges, negative school meal account balances, bounced check fees, and credit balances for students leaving the District or graduating.

It is the parents' (or guardian's) responsibility to ensure that a child comes to school with either a lunch packed at home, money to purchase meals at school or a pre-paid positive meal account balance, or takes the time each year to successfully apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits. The District provides conveniences that allow the pre-payment of funds, thus reducing the need to send cash daily with students, and it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to closely monitor a student's account balance. There are multiple ways this information may be determined:

- The balance is provided (in a discrete manner) to the student at the cash register if directly requested by the student.
- The balance may be tracked online through myschoolaccount.com. This tool will provide e-mailed low balance notifications to parents/guardians and high school students.
- The District communicates low-balance and negative balance information through various notices.
- Parents/guardians may call the school's kitchen at any time during school hours to check a balance.

Early each school year (or in the case of a new student, shortly after his/her registration), the District shall request the parents/guardians of District students to sign and return a statement for each child:

- a. acknowledging their responsibility to pay for all meal account charges incurred by their child;
- b. that they understand how to access the myschoolaccount.com online service and that myschoolaccount.com is the best way for them to monitor their child's meal account balance;
- c. providing the District with an e-mail address they currently maintain and monitor in order to receive notifications related to the District's food service program and their child's meal account balance; and
- d. choosing one of the following options in the event their child has insufficient funds to pay for an item presented to the cafeteria cashier:

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(1) The child may charge all meals and à la carte items requested by the child. This is the default option and will be implemented unless the parent/guardian selects a different option by a signed written direction delivered to the District. The parents/guardians are responsible for all charges incurred by their child.

(2) The child may charge a meal requested by the child, but not any à la carte items. The District will attempt to honor this request, but circumstances may arise where à la carte items are provided to the child and charged to the child’s account. The parents/guardians are responsible for all charges incurred by their child, and are responsible to communicate to their child this restriction on charges when there are insufficient funds.

(3) The child may not purchase any meals or à la carte items. The parents/guardians are responsible to communicate to their child this restriction on charges when there are insufficient funds. The parents/guardians must make other arrangements to insure their child is properly nourished.

In determining whether there are insufficient funds to pay for any particular item, available funds are first applied to any negative meal account balance and then to the price of a requested meal, before being available for the purchase of à la carte items.

2. Deposits to Meal Accounts.

Deposits to meal accounts may be made by cash or check in the cafeteria during meal periods, or online through myschoolaccount.com.

3. Students Without the Means to Pay for a Meal.

Students who come to school without the means to pay for their lunch and/or breakfast (whether in cash or through a positive balance in their student meal account) may request and receive a lunch meal or a breakfast meal, at the appropriate time, and may charge the cost of such meal to their student meal account, including à la carte items. However, this paragraph 3 shall not apply if the student’s parent or guardian has specifically provided a written directive to the District to withhold a school meal and/or à la carte items under these circumstances.

School Code §
1337(d)(2)

School Code §
1337(d)(3)

4. Notification to Apply for Free and Reduced Price Meals Program.

Whenever a student owes money for five (5) or more student meals (breakfasts and/or lunches), the District shall make at least two (2) attempts to reach the student’s parent or guardian and have the parent or guardian apply for participation in the federal free and reduced price school food program. The District shall offer assistance with applying for such participation. A communication to a high school student under paragraph 6(b) below does not satisfy the requirements of this paragraph 4. A warning or other notice that requires a person to log into an online account (other than the person’s e-mail account) to see the notice does not count as an attempt to reach a student’s parent or guardian under this paragraph 4.

5. Communications Regarding Low or Negative Student Account Balances.

Subject to paragraphs 6 and 7 below, the District shall utilize the following procedures to communicate low or negative student account balances:

a. The primary source of student account balance information is the District’s myschoolaccount.com online system. All parents and guardians should make arrangements to access this system and periodically monitor the status of their students’ accounts.

b. At least bi-weekly, notices will be sent by e-mail to the parents/guardians of students who have negative meal account balances. All parents/guardians should register with the District and the District’s myschoolaccount.com online system a current and monitored e-mail account where meal account balance notifications may be sent to them. If no such e-mail account information is provided, the District will send the bi-weekly notices by means of a letter addressed to the parents/guardians and given to the student for delivery and/or mailed to them. Parents/guardians should be aware that e-mail is a more reliable and timely method to receive negative meal account balance notifications.

c. The District may also arrange for additional notices and warnings of low or negative account balances to parents/guardians and/or high school students from time to time.

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School Code §
1337(d)(4)(i)

6. Communicating with Students.
- a. In the case of an elementary or middle school student, the District shall direct all communications regarding money owed by the student for school meals to the student’s parent or guardian, and not to the student.
 - b. In the case of a high school student, the District may direct communications regarding a low balance or money owed by the student for school meals to the student, *provided* that the communications are made individually to the student by appropriate school personnel and are made discreetly.
 - c. A student is permitted to review his/her student meal account on the District’s myschoolaccount.com online payment system, including balances and warning messages associated with the account, notwithstanding clauses (a) and (b) above.

School Code §
1337(d)(4)(ii)

7. Communicating with Parents/Guardians.

The District may contact a student’s parent or guardian by means of a letter addressed to the parent/guardian, which is given to the student for delivery to the parent/guardian. The letter should be enclosed in an envelope addressed to the parent/guardian, not the student, and should be marked “Confidential—To Be Opened by Address Only”, or words of similar import. The letter may not be given to the student in the cafeteria in order to avoid any identification or stigmatization of the student as a person who has a low or negative student meal account balance.

The District may also use others means to contact a student’s parent or guardian, such as mailed letters, telephone calls, text messages, and e-mail, including such methods when sent from an online or automated system or application.

School Code §
1337(d)(5)

8. Prohibited Actions.
- a. The District shall not publicly identify or stigmatize a student who cannot pay for a school meal or who owes money for school meals. However, it shall not constitute public identification or stigmatization for the District to restrict privileges and activities of such students if those same restrictions apply to students who owe money for other school-related purposes. (*See, e.g.*, paragraph 9 below.)

b. The District shall not require a student who cannot pay for a school meal to perform chores or other work to pay for the school meal. This clause (b) shall not apply if the chores or other work are required of all students regardless of the student’s ability to pay for the meal.

c. The District shall not require a student to discard a school meal after it was served to the student due to the student’s inability to pay for the school meal or the amount of money owed by the student for earlier school meals.

9. Treatment of Negative Balances as an “Obligation.”

Any negative balance in a student’s meal account will be considered a failure to account for a “financial obligation” as defined in the student handbook, with all the consequences of having such an obligation which are set forth in the student handbook.

Similarly, any negative balance in a student’s meal account at another school to which the Catasauqua Area School District has assigned the student to attend school classes will be considered a failure to account for a financial obligation as defined in the student handbook for the District school which includes the student’s grade level, with all the consequences of having such an obligation which are set forth in that student handbook, *provided* that the other school (or its school district) has a similar policy for students in that school (or its school district) who are assigned to attend school classes in the Catasauqua Area School District and have a negative balance in their meal account at Catasauqua Area School District.

10. Insufficient Funds.

There is a twenty dollar (\$20.00) charge for returned personal checks or returned ACH transactions from myschoolaccount.com. If there are more than two (2) returned checks in a school year, only cash or a certified check will be accepted as payment to the student’s meal account.

11. Credit Balances.

The District reimburses credit balances over five dollars (\$5.00) to seniors who have graduated. The reimbursements are issued in July or August. Parents/guardians may request reimbursements of credit balances in writing at any time during the school year. Credit balances may be transferred to another student account upon request.

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12. Collections of Negative Balances.

If at any time during a school year a student’s meal account balance is negative by more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) (i.e., -\$25.00 or lower), an in-person conference will be requested at the Principal’s discretion, and the parent/guardian will need to provide sufficient assurance that he/she is aware of the balance and will meet a timetable for paying down the debt while accounting for ongoing meal services. If the parent/guardian does not cooperate in the process, the matter will be referred to Child Protective Services, and the District may undertake collection proceedings in the appropriate court.

The District may also undertake collection proceedings in the appropriate court to collect negative balances in a student’s meal account if such a negative balance is not settled by June 30th.

The District will consider the benefits of potential collections in the context of the costs that would be incurred to achieve those collections.

13. Replenishment of Negative Balances Written Off by the District.

Negative balances in student meal accounts at the end of a school year may be carried over as a delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the next school year. The District shall make reasonable efforts to collect delinquent debt within a reasonable timeframe. When District officials determine that further collection efforts for delinquent debt are useless or too costly, the debt must be reclassified as “bad debt” under 2 CFR § 200.426, and must be restored by the District to the nonprofit school food service account from non-Federal sources. Records reflecting delinquent payment and debt recovery shall be retained to show:

- Evidence of efforts to collect debt on a timeline reflected in procedures written for this policy.
- Financial documentation showing when the debt became an operating loss.
- Funds written off as bad debt were restored to the nonprofit school food service account from non-Federal sources.

USDA SP 47-2016

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14. Donations.

Gifts or donations to the District for students with negative student meal account balances that are not in conflict with 2 CFR part 200 may be accepted for the direct benefit of students. Such gifts or donations may be deposited into the food service account, *provided* that a separate revenue account or funding number is used so that they are not co-mingled with food service account revenue funds from federal and state reimbursement, food sales, and other sources.

After the District completes reasonable efforts to collect a delinquent student meal account without complete success, and immediately before the time when the District would otherwise reclassify the delinquent debt as “bad debt,” the District may apply gifts or donations deposited in the food service account to the satisfaction of the delinquent debt, to the extent such funds are then available.

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