

SUBJECT: SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (LUNCH AND BREAKFAST); MEAL CHARGING AND PROHIBITION AGAINST MEAL SHAMING

School Food Service Program (Lunch and Breakfast)

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program to receive commodities and subsidies from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In return, the District provides free and reduced-price meals to elementary and secondary students in its schools and serves meals that meet federal requirements.

The Superintendent or designee will carry out the rules of the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. The District's Reviewing Official and Verification Official or the Department of Social Services Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) will determine student eligibility. Appeals regarding eligibility should be submitted to the District's Hearing Official.

The District may allow free or reduced-price meals for qualifying District students after receiving a written or electronic application from the student's parent or guardian. Applications will be provided by the District to all families.

School officials must also determine eligibility for school meals by using the NYSSIS Direct Certification Matching Process. Any student residing in a household receiving federal assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), or Medicaid is may be automatically eligible for free meals once the household's enrollment in these programs is verified through the Direct Certification Matching Process, which is ongoing throughout the school year. Eligible families will not have to complete any further applications. The District will notify parents or guardians of the household's eligibility, giving them the opportunity to decline free meals.

Smart Snack Standards

All food and beverage items that are accessible and sold to students on school campuses during the school day*, other than those foods provided as part of the school meals programs, must be Smart Snack Compliant. This includes, but is not limited to, a la carte items sold in the cafeteria, foods sold in school stores, and items sold in vending machines. Foods and beverages sold during fundraisers, unless items are not intended for consumption at school, or are otherwise exempt by NYS, must also be compliant.

*The school day is defined as midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day.

Meal Charge and Prohibition against Meal Shaming Policy

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Purpose

The goal of the Hamburg Central School District is to provide student access to nutritious no- or low-cost meals each school day that meets Federal requirements, and to ensure that a pupil whose parent/guardian has unpaid school meal fees is not shamed or treated differently than a pupil whose parent/guardian does not have unpaid meal fees.

However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our school. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program and, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

The intent of this policy is to establish procedures to address unpaid meal charges throughout Hamburg Central Schools in a way that does not stigmatize, distress or embarrass students. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced reimbursable school breakfast and lunch meals only. **The Hamburg Central School District provides this policy as information for those students in the event they forget or lose their money.** Charging of items outside of the reimbursable meals (a la carte items, adult meals, etc.) is expressly prohibited.

Free Meal Benefit

Free eligible students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch meal of their choice each day. A la carte items or other similar items must be paid/prepaid.

Reduced Meal Benefit

Reduced eligible students will be allowed to receive a breakfast of their choice for \$.25 and lunch of their choice for \$.25 each day. The charge meals offered to students will be the same reimbursable meals available to all. All students coming in for breakfast and/or lunch will be served and charged to student account unless the student's parent or guardian has specifically provided written permission to the school to withhold a meal. A la carte items or other similar items must be paid/prepaid.

Full Pay Students

Students will pay for meals at the school's published paid meal rate each day. The charge meals offered to students will be the same reimbursable meals available to all. All students coming in for breakfast and/or lunch will be served and charged to student account unless the student's parent or guardian has specifically provided written permission to the school to withhold a meal. A la carte items or other similar items must be paid/prepaid.

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Parent Notification

Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program and will be notified through the School Messenger parent notification system/email system when student lunch accounts are low or have been exhausted. In addition to these calls and/or emails, parents/guardians may also receive written correspondence via USPS.

Parent Outreach

The Food Service Department will communicate with parents/guardians with five or more outstanding meal charges. An application for school meals will be provided. Assistance in completing the application will be available.

The building level administrator will contact the parent/guardian to determine if there are other issues within the household causing the child to have insufficient funds, offering any other assistance that is appropriate.

Minimizing Student Distress

School will not publicly identify or stigmatize any student on the line or discuss any outstanding meal debt in the presence of any other students.

Students who incur meal charges will not be required to wear a wristband or handstamp, or to do chores or work to pay for meals.

Schools will not throw away a meal after it has been served because of the student's inability to pay for the meal or because of previous meal charges.

Schools will not take any action directed at a pupil to collect unpaid school meal fees.

Schools will deal directly with parents/guardians regarding unpaid school meal fees.

Ongoing Eligibility Certification

The Food Service Department will conduct direct certification with NYSSIS or using NYSED Roster Upload at least monthly to maximize free eligibility.

The Food Service Department will provide parents/guardians with applications for school meals and instructions at the beginning of each school year in school enrollment packet, which will include an explanation of the process to apply electronically.

The Food Service Department will provide applications for school meals throughout the school year to families identified as owing meal charges.

The building level administrator will use administrative prerogative judiciously, only after using exhaustive efforts to obtain a completed application from the parent/guardian only with available information on family size and income that falls within approvable guidelines.

The Food Service Department will coordinate with the Pupil Services Department to ensure all foster, homeless, and migrant students are certified as eligible for free meals throughout the year.

Payments/Refunds/Unclaimed Funds

Students/Parents/Guardians may pay for meals in advance electronically or with a check payable to *Hamburg School Lunch Fund*. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student may/will be carried over to the next school year.

Refunds for withdrawn students and graduating students will be issued, upon request, at the end of the school year for balances in excess of \$5.00, or be transferred to a sibling's account.

Unclaimed Funds must be requested within 90 days of withdrawal/graduation from the District. Unclaimed funds, if not requested, will become the property of the Hamburg Central School District Food Service Program.

Food Substitutions for Children with Disabilities

Federal regulations governing the operation of Child Nutrition Programs, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that children with disabilities be offered the opportunity to participate in all academic and nonacademic activities including school nutrition programs. The District will make reasonable accommodations to those children whose disabilities restrict their diets, such as providing substitutions or modifications in the regular meal patterns. These meal substitutions will be offered at no extra charge. A student with a disability must be provided substitutions in food when that need is supported by a statement signed by a physician attesting to the need for the substitutions and recommending alternate foods.

However, the school food service is not required to provide meal services (for example, School Breakfast Program) to students with disabilities when the meal service is not normally available to the general student body, unless a meal service is required under the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan as mandated by a physician's written instructions.

Food Substitutions for Nondisabled Children

Though not required, the District will also allow substitutions for non-disabled children who are unable to consume the regular meal because of medical or other special dietary needs if the request is supported by a statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

The District may also allow substitutions for fluid milk with a non-dairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent (as established by the Secretary of Agriculture) to fluid milk and meets nutritional standards for students who are unable to consume fluid milk because of medical or other special dietary needs if the request is supported by a statement signed by a recognized medical authority or by the student's parent/legal guardian.

HACCP-Based Food Safety Program

Schools participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast programs are required to implement a food safety program based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. The District must develop a written food safety program for each of its food preparation and service facilities that is based on either traditional HACCP principles or the Process Approach to HACCP. (The Process Approach simplifies traditional HACCP by grouping foods according to preparation process and applying the same control measures to all menu items within the group, rather than developing an HACCP plan for each item.)

Regardless of the implementation option selected, the District's written food safety program must also include:

- a) Critical control points and critical limits;
- b) Monitoring procedures;
- c) Corrective actions;
- d) Verification procedures;
- e) Recordkeeping requirements; and
- f) Periodic review and food safety program revision.

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, PL 108-265
Child Nutrition Act 1966, 42 USC § 1771 et seq.
Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 1946, 42 USC § 1751 et seq.
§ 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC § 794 et seq.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 USC §§ 1400-1485
7 CFR Parts 15B, 210 and 220
Education Law §§ 902(b), 915, 918, 1604(28), 1709(22), 1709(23) and 2503(9)(a)
8 NYCRR §§ 200.2(b)(1) and 200.2(b)(2)
Social Services Law § 95

Adopted: 7/5/00

Revised: 6/12/18