

Del Norte County Unified School District

Nutrition Services Department

Procedures for Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs

Providing for Students with Special Dietary Needs begins with the communication and identification of these students. All Nutrition Service site staff will be proactive in this regard by doing the following:

- a) Have the Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations form available at the Central Kitchens, Nutrition Services Department office and the school site offices.
- b) Follow up with parents of students with Special Dietary needs that have not turned in the proper paperwork. For example, the physicians statement must identify:
 - 1) The child's disability and explain why the disability restricts the child's diet.
 - 2) The major life activity affected by the disability.
 - 3) The food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet and the food or choice of foods that must be substituted.
- c) Keep a list of these students in the central kitchen area with the information of their dietary needs so all nutrition services staff can become familiar with this information.
- d) Include in a popup message on the POS register that displays when a student enters their keypad number (or their finger is scanned) that states what foods they need to avoid, to enable the cashier to check their plate for these items.
- e) When the student moves from K-8 to high school, the K-8 Coordinator will contact the High School Coordinator and provide them with a copy of the documentation of the dietary requirements of the student.
- f) At the beginning of each school year, parents of these students will be contacted to confirm that the diet order on file still reflects the dietary needs of the child. Any changes to existing diet orders must be in writing whenever they occur.

Student with Disabilities:

- a) Nutrition site staff must make food substitutions or modifications for student with disabilities at no additional cost to the household. These substitutions or modifications must be based on a prescription written by a licensed physician.
- b) Under no circumstances, should the nutrition site staff revise or change a diet prescriptions or medical order created for these students. It is not the responsibility of the nutrition staff to determine what foods may be substituted in special diets. The staff, however, is required to read food labels to identify potential allergy-causing ingredients.

- c) Children with disabilities who require special supplements, substitutions or modifications to food texture are required to provide written documentation with accompanying instructions from a licensed physician for the Nutrition site staff to follow.
- d) Nutrition site staff is not required to provide meals to students with disabilities outside of the regular meal service unless this is specified in the student's IEP (Individualized Education Program).
- e) For students requiring assistance in eating, the Nutrition site staff will not be responsible to physically feed students. This will be handled through the Special Education Department.

When a student's IEP includes a nutrition component, the Special Education Department will contact the Nutrition Services Department so the nutrition staff will be involved early on in decisions regarding special meals or modifications. The Nutrition site staff is required to accommodate the special diet requirements in an IEP. The special dietary needs of students with disabilities are best served when the Nutrition site staff can partner with parents, students, Special Education staff, doctors, dieticians and others.

Students without Disabilities:

- a) Nutrition site staff are encouraged, but not required, to provide food substitutions or modifications for children without disabilities with medically certified special dietary needs at no additional costs to the household. A determination will be made on a case-by-case basis for these students who have food intolerances or allergies without life-threatening reactions.
- b) Substitutions for these students must be based on a statement by a recognized medical authority. The medical statement must include:
 - 1) An identification of the medical or other special dietary condition which restricts the child's diet.
 - 2) The food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet and the food or choice of foods to be substituted.
- c) All recommendations for accommodations or changes to existing diet orders must be documented in writing.
- d) Substitutions for students without disabilities can usually be addressed by offering choices and through the Offer versus Serve meal services.

Milk Substitutions:

Offering fluid milk substitutions for students with medical or other special dietary needs that do not rise to the level of a disability is at the discretion of the district and Nutrition Services.

Del Norte's Nutrition Services will provide milk substitutes that meet all the nutrients listed in the CDE Nutrition Services Division Management Bulletin, Final Rule: Fluid Milk Substitutions, Number: USDA-CNP-04-2010

*Juice cannot be offered as a fluid milk substitute for students with a medical special dietary needs that do not rise to the level of a disability.

*Parents or guardians making a request for a milk substitution must complete the "Parental Request for a Fluid Milk Substitution for School Age Children". The forms must be kept on file at the central kitchen and the Nutrition Services Department.

*The Director of Nutrition Services will identify an acceptable fluid milk substitute and notify parents/guardians and staff. Any alternative must be provided by the parent/ guardian.

References:

"Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs", Nutrition Services Division Management Bulletin, Number: CNP-07-2014

"Final Rule: Fluid Milk Substitutions", Nutrition Services Division Management Bulletin, Number: USDA-CNP-04-2010

"Accommodating Special Dietary Needs", Quick Reference Tool, developed for the SNP New Sponsor Training, Cal Pro Net Center at the San Jose State University in conjunction with California Department of Education August 2015