

Board Policy EE: Food Services Management

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Purpose

The Board of Education is committed to providing every child with access to a healthy breakfast and lunch during the school day. City Schools of Decatur (CSD) must comply with all federal regulations related to the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. The School Nutrition Program (SNP) operates as an independent fund, with the food service operation sustaining itself through meal payments and reimbursements from the federal and state governments.

Payments for Meals

CSD encourages the practice of prepayment for meals and shall maintain systems that allow families to make prepayments and recurring payments into student accounts. Parents/guardians are responsible for meal payments and for ensuring the student's account remains in good standing. CSD encourages funds to be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day; however, payments will also be accepted at the time of purchase.

Meal Charges

Unpaid meal charges directly impact the meal program and families of CSD. Therefore, CSD opposes the charging of school meals. However, students will be allowed to charge breakfast and/or lunch meals to their account for the equivalent cost of a maximum of three days (or its equivalent cost) after the balance reaches zero. A la carte items may not be charged. While the National School Lunch Program does not require schools to provide meals to a child who does not pay for a meal and does not qualify for Free or Reduced Meals, CSD will provide an alternate meal to a student whose account exceeds the allowable charged amount. Students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program, through the nature of this designation, will be provided the regular meal, and not receive alternate meals. When alternate meals are served, staff shall take extra care to treat students with dignity and respect.

The district is further committed to ensuring that nonprofit food service revenues do not subsidize meals for non-students and therefore shall not permit non-students to charge meals.

Communication

To discourage the charging of school meals, CSD shall take a proactive approach to communicating with families.

- At the beginning of the school year, and whenever a student enrolls during the school year, parents/guardians shall be notified of CSD's meal payment policies and be encouraged to prepay for meals whenever possible.
- The Free and Reduced Lunch application shall be made available to all families and all families shall be encouraged to complete the free and reduced lunch meal application. Per federal requirements, this form must be completed annually. Families may apply for free or reduced-price meals at any time.
- Once a student's meal account balance is negative, families shall be notified daily until a negative account balance is resolved.
- CSD shall maintain a system that permits families to opt-in and set a threshold to receive meal balance alerts. Information about the system and how to opt-in shall be provided to all families at least annually.
- The school social worker, or other appropriate staff, shall contact families of students whose accounts become delinquent.

Alternate Funding for Delinquent Accounts

Donations may be accepted to help reduce delinquent accounts and outstanding annual charges for families in financial need who do not qualify for Free and Reduced Meals. These funds may come from individuals, community organizations, or other non-federal sources. These donations may be used to establish a "reserve fund" to support students/families with outstanding debt in financial need who do not qualify for Free and Reduced Meals.

The Board recognizes that families may experience financial hardships without qualifying for the Free and Reduced Lunch program. The Superintendent is authorized to establish regulations and/or procedures for identifying meal accounts to which donations may be applied.

Refunds and/or Transfers

Unclaimed funds for enrolled CSD students will carry over to the next school year automatically. Graduating or withdrawing students may complete a request for refund within one year of graduation or withdrawal. Any remaining balances left unclaimed after this time will be closed, and the funds will no longer be available. These funds will be reallocated to the nutrition fund and used to help relieve delinquent debt.

Delinquent Debt and Bad Debt

Unpaid meal charges are considered “delinquent debt” when payment is overdue. This occurs when an account is negative and payments through the school year are not recovered to bring the account current.

When debts have been determined to be uncollectible by the district, the debt must be reclassified as “bad debt.” Section 200.426 Subpart E of the Code of Federal Regulations states that “Bad debts...arising from uncollectible accounts and other claims, are unallowable.” School nutrition funding cannot be used to cover costs related to bad debt, rather it must be restored using non-Federal funds.

To avoid bad debt, the CSD Board of Education strongly encourages parents/guardians to resolve all delinquent debt. While the use of general funds may be used to resolve bad debt, this money would have to be reallocated away from the classroom. Bad debt shall be resolved annually.

Definitions

National School Lunch Program (NSLP): A federally-assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions that provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or no-cost lunches to children each school day. The NSLP provides eligible students with free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL).

Alternate Meal: A courtesy meal provided to students who have exceeded the meal charge limit and are without sufficient funds to cover a meal purchase.

a la carte: Any individual food items priced and sold separately from the regular meal, such as chips, beverages, and granola bars.

Bad Debt: When delinquent debt has been determined to be uncollectible

Delinquent Debt or Negative Account: Unpaid meal charges on student meal accounts, resulting in a negative balance

Meal Charges: When the cost of the meal cannot be paid with the customer’s available nutrition account balance, and is thus charged to the student’s account as a debt to be paid later.

Regular Meal or Reimbursable Meal: A single-priced lunch or breakfast meal that meets the National School Lunch Program’s Nutrition Standards and offers the minimum required amounts of all the USDA meal pattern components for each age/grade group served.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

Note: To access the policy references, *CLICK HERE:* [State of Georgia Terms and Conditions](#) and close the LexisNexis tab, which will return you to the policy. Click on the links below to be taken to each specific code. **You should only have to do this one time per session.**

State References

O.C.G.A. 20-02-0066

O.C.G.A. 20-02-0187

O.C.G.A. 50-05-0081

Rule 160-5-6-.01

Description

[School breakfast programs](#)

[State-wide school lunch program; instruction in nutrition, hygiene, etiquette, and social graces; school food and nutrition personnel](#)

[Unlawful for agencies or subdivisions to purchase other than United States produced beef; exceptions; penalty](#)

[Statewide School Nutritional Program](#)

Federal References

02 CFR 200.318

Description

[General procurement standards](#)

07 CFR 210.11	Competitive Food Service and Standards
07 CFR 210.12	Student, parent, and community involvement
07 CFR 210.13	Facilities Management
07 CFR 210.18	Administrative Reviews-School Nutrition
07 CFR 210.20	National School Lunch Program-Reporting and record keeping
07 CFR 210.21	Procurement-School Nutrition
07 CFR 210.22	Audits-School Nutrition
07 CFR 210.29	Management evaluations
07 CFR 210.31	Local school wellness policy
07 CFR 215.1	Special Milk Program for Children, under the Child Nutrition Act
07 CFR 220.13	School Breakfast Program- Special Responsibilities of State Agencies
07 CFR 220.7	Requirements for participation
42 USC 1758	Program requirements-School Lunch Programs
42 USC 1758b	Local School Wellness Policy
42 USC Chapter 13	School Lunch Programs
42 USC Chapter 13A	Child Nutrition