

## CHAPTER 8.00 - AUXILIARY SERVICES

### FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS AND MEAL PRICES

8.42\*+

- I. Free or reduced-price meals shall be served to all students who qualify based on eligibility criteria approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Principals shall distribute the free and reduced-price policy and application to the entire student body at the beginning of each school year and to each student enrolling during the year. The principal has the responsibility for submitting on a daily basis to the Food Service Office all free/reduced applications collected at the school site. All applications shall be processed by the Food Service Office and shall be administered in accordance with current guidelines. All current free and reduced-price applications approved and denied shall be on file in the Food Service office. A current application must be on file for each student approved for free or reduced-price meals before the meal benefits may be received at the school site. All applications shall be retained on file for a period of three (3) years.
  - A. The income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals shall be in accordance with the scales provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services based upon income guidelines prescribed by the United States Secretary of Agriculture.
  - B. Eligibility criteria shall be applicable to all District schools and shall provide that all students from a family meeting the eligibility criteria and attending any District school are offered the same benefits.
  - C. Procedures for implementing the free and reduced-price meal services shall be reviewed annually and shall be in accordance with procedures and guidelines published by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the United States Department of Agriculture.
- II. The policy of the District School Board of Santa Rosa County will be that meals may not be charged. Students who receive a meal without the means to pay will accrue an unpaid meal balance.
  - A. In the event that a student has made his/her way through the meal line and does not have payment, the meal will be served, and an unpaid meal balance will be accrued to the student. No unwrapped meal is to be taken away from a student.
  - B. When a student has accumulated three unpaid meals, the parent shall be provided a notice signed by the principal explaining the district “no charge” policy and the status of the child’s account. When the student has accumulated five unpaid meals, the principal shall contact the parent for a conference. If the parent is not responsive, the student will be referred to the School Social Work Department. A representative from the School

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Social Work Department will visit the home to discuss the family's eligibility for various programs including but not limited to Free and Reduced Meal Program, public and private assistance programs, and Child Protective Services Program. Any monies received will be applied to the unpaid balance. Until the student's unpaid balance has been paid, the student will be provided the pattern meal of the day. The price of the meal will accrue to the student's unpaid meal balance.

- C. It will be the responsibility of the principal to collect all unpaid meal balances. The cafeteria manager will provide assistance in collecting the unpaid meal balances. All unpaid balances will be remitted to the Food Service Department by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, from funds the school has collected for this purpose.
- III. All adult meals will be paid for unless the meals are part of a special incentive program or the meals are for school food service employees. Parents or other visitors may eat in the cafeterias upon invitation from the school administrators.

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

**1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.**

### **LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED:**

**570.98, 570.981, F.S.**

### **STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES RULE(S):**

**5P-1.004**

### **HISTORY:**

**ADOPTED: 07/01/2002**  
**REVISION DATE(S): 04/26/04; 08/10/2006; 01/22/2009**  
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**FORMERLY: 7.20, 7.21, 7.22, 7.50**