

Purpose

This document tells site teams how to make sure meals and snacks served to Early Learning children meet USDA Child Nutrition requirements.

Guidance

The PSESD Early Learning Program works with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to provide nutritious meals and snacks to our students. The goal is to improve and maintain the health and nutritional status of children while promoting the development of good eating habits. CACFP provides federal funds to reimburse the costs of meals/snacks, provided they meet the meal patterns set for by USDA. Links to specific meal pattern requirements are found at the end of this document.

When meals/snacks do not meet CACFP requirements they are not a creditable meal, meaning we cannot receive credit for them. They are also referred to as “disallowed” meals. This may happen for an individual child or for an entire class, depending on the situation. Meals and snacks that are disallowed will not receive USDA reimbursement.

All reimbursable USDA meals and snacks served must:

- meet CACFP meal pattern requirements
- provide enough food to meet serving size requirements
- be offered twice to children seated at the table
- be recorded on the attendance/meal count form before children leave the table

Disallowed meals may result from failure by the food provider to meet CACFP/USDA requirements, including agreed upon substitutions for allergies/medical conditions. In addition, PSESD Early Learning honors family food preferences whenever possible. This may result in a child’s meal being non-credible or disallowed and the cost is paid for through the Early Learning program.

Procedure

USDA Reimbursement

1. Reimbursable Meals -Site staff must do the following

- review and be familiar with CACFP meal pattern and serving size requirements
- contact their site director if meal patterns and/or serving sizes do not meet CACFP requirements
- offer foods twice to children seated at the table
- record meal attendance on the attendance/meal count form before children leave the table
- ensure that meals/food served to Early Learning students do not leave the classroom -leftover food is never to be sent home with students, families or staff

2. Disallowed Meals

- **ECEAP only:** Site staff must record a “D” on meal attendance/meal count form for each child that the meal does not meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. This indicates that the food vendor did not provide appropriate food to meet requirements.

USDA Reimbursement Procedure

- **ECEAP only:** Site staff must record an “E” on the meal attendance/meal count form for each child that does not meet CACFP meal pattern requirements because of a family food preference. This indicates that Early Learning will pay for the meal.
- **ECEAP only:** Site staff must record on the attendance/meal count sheet the reason for the disallowed meal.
- Site staff must contact their site director and/or Regional Nutrition Coordinator to alert them to disallowed meals.

Example of Disallowed Breakfast: Fat-free milk and cereal offered to students. No fruit or vegetable is offered. This breakfast is missing one of the required components, fruit/veggies. All meals would be disallowed.

Example of Disallowed Lunch: Peanut Butter Sandwich, Cheese Stick, Applesauce, 100 % Fruit Juice and an oatmeal cookie is sent for field trip. No milk is offered and this is a disallowed meal.

Example of Disallowed Snack: There is a family preference for child to receive almond milk. Child receives apple slices and almond milk. Snack is not eligible for USDA reimbursement because almond milk is not a reimbursable milk. This snack should be marked as an “E” on attendance/meal count record.

Related Documents

Attendance/Meal Count Form

Resources

Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern for Infants

www.k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/pubdocs/CreditableFoodsGuideMAR2007Infants.pdf

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Meal Pattern Requirements for Children Ages 1 Through 12 Years

<http://www.k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/pubdocs/CreditableFoodsGuideMAR2007Children.pdf>