



## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Health and Nutrition Services  
1535 West Jefferson Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

### Free and Reduced-Price Policy Statement

Revised Summer 2015

#### Introduction

In accordance with 7 CFR 245.10, each Local Educational Agency (LEA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and/or the Special Milk Program (SMP) with the free milk option must have an approved free and reduced-price policy statement on file with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) that accurately describes its current free and reduced-price policies. LEAs just beginning participation in the NSLP, SBP, or SMP must submit their policy statement to ADE for review as part of the new sponsor application process. The policy statement becomes a permanent document, but must be amended when the LEA makes a substantive change to its free and reduced-price policy. Amendments must be submitted for review by ADE by October 15 each year.

#### Policy Statement

Sponsor Name: The PEAK School

This statement applies to the programs in which the sponsor will be participating as indicated on the application and agreement.

In fulfilling its responsibilities to implement a policy that conforms to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations regarding determination of children's eligibility for free and reduced-price benefits, The PEAK School wishes to state the following:

- A. The PEAK School's CNP Web Sponsor Application will be updated each school year to reflect the following:
  - a. The household application, application letter, and notification letters provided to households applying for benefits will be those provided by ADE;
  - b. And/or a customized household application, application letter, and notification letters have been developed and will be provided to households applying for benefits. Customized applications and letters must be reviewed and approved by ADE prior to use.
- B. Tracy Braatz is the LEA official that has been designated to make eligibility determinations.

- C. The following direct certification procedures have been implemented:
  - a. Direct certification will take place minimally 3 times a year using an upload of student information. New students enrolling at The PEAK School will be checked for direct certification within 10 instructional days.
- D. The following procedures for accepting applications for benefits have been implemented:
  - a. The PEAK School will provide parents with lunch applications beginning at least 2 weeks prior to the first day of school. Office hours will be available daily for at least two weeks prior to the start of school for parents to turn in applications or have any questions answered. Applications will be reviewed for eligibility within 5 business days of receiving them. Application eligibility will be reviewed for accuracy within 2 business days of the original eligibility determination. Families will be notified in the form of a letter once eligibility has been reviewed. Phone calls will be placed to any family previously enrolled who has a change in eligibility from the previous year.
- E. Eligibility will be determined in accordance with the current Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs).
- F. A foster child will be categorically eligible for free meals. A foster child may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other children, as including children in foster care as household members can help other children in the household qualify for free or reduced-price meals. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits, this does not prevent a foster child from receiving free meal benefits.
- G. Households with children who are categorically eligible under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs will be instructed to contact the school for assistance in receiving benefits and to mark the relevant box on the application to indicate their status.
- H. ADE and The PEAK School will ensure there are no barriers for participation in the NSLP, SBP, and/or SMP for Limited English Proficient (LEP) families and will communicate with parents and guardians in a language they can understand throughout the certification and verification processes.
- I. The PEAK School will abide by the hearing procedures set forth in 7 CFR 245.7 and nondiscrimination practices set forth in 7 CFR 245.8.
- J. The PEAK School will verify approved free and reduced-price applications by November 15 each year as specified by 7 CFR 245.6(a) using the following procedures:
  - a. The PEAK School will review all income applications and send home notices of verification to the families that have been randomly selected for verification. Once all of the necessary paperwork is returned to The PEAK School, it will be reviewed for accuracy and final notification of benefits will be sent out.

- K. The PEAK School will maintain a description of the verification activities as required by 7 CFR 245.6(a)(3)(c).
- L. The PEAK School will submit to ADE a summary report of verification activities performed as required by 7 CFR 245.6(a)(h) by February 1 each year.
- M. The following measures have been taken to prevent disclosure of confidential free and reduced-price eligibility information, as is required by 7 CFR 245.6(f-k):
  - a. Access to eligibility information has been limited to staff that deal directly with certification. BID is color coded based on eligibility criteria and only available to staff working directly with lunch billing, and daily edit check.
- N. The PEAK School has implemented the following policies per site regarding meal charges:
  - a. (describe policies regarding meal charges, including specific number of meals that may be charged) Meals will be ordered by students in a two week cycle. Billing for meals will be based on the number of meals ordered. Charges for reduced meals will be in compliance the price set by the state. Charges for full priced meals will be in compliance with state guideline using the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool.
- O. When more than one lunch, breakfast, or type of milk is offered which meets the requirements of 7 CFR parts 210.10, 220.8 or 215.2, children eligible for free or reduced-price benefits will have the same choice of meals and/or milk that is available to those children who pay the full price for their meals and/or milk. To prevent overt discrimination of children receiving free or reduced-price meals, the following methods of collecting payment from children paying the full- or reduced-price of the meal will/will NOT be implemented:
  - a. Payment will never be collected at time of lunch service. All billing and payment for lunch services will be done confidentially through the office personnel who work directly with certification in the lunch program.
- P. When selling competitive foods during a meal service, the following practices will be implemented to prevent overt identification of the children receiving free or reduced-price meals:
  - a. No competitive meals will be offered during student lunch meal service.
- Q. The PEAK School will notify the public through a public/media release which will be provided to applicable local media, unemployment offices, and major employers contemplating large layoffs in the attendance area of its schools. The release will include the name(s) of the school(s) approved to operate the NSLP, SBP, and/or SMP in CNP Web, Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) for free and reduced-price meals, and other information required to be contained in the letter to households. A copy of the public/media release which will be used is attached to this statement.

(Print or Type Name and Title)

Paula M. Drossman  
Supt. / co-chair holder

(Authorized Signature)

Paula M. Drossman

The PEAK School

(Sponsor)

10/13/15

(Date)