

Commissioner's Memo
4/2/2020

CNU-20-033 Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2020-21

Memo Information

Memo Number **CNU-20-033**

Memo Date 4/2/2020

Memo Type Regulatory

Unit Child Nutrition

Regulatory Authority Section 747 Division B of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94), Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1760(p), SP 07-2020; 7CFR 210.14

Response Required YES

Attention Superintendents; General Business Managers; Bookkeepers; Child Nutrition Directors/Managers

Primary Contact Information

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Memo Text

ATTENTION: SUPERINTENDENTS, CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS, DISTRICT FINANCIAL OFFIERS

The purpose of this memo is to provide notice to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and School Food Authorities (SFAs) that any SFA having a zero or positive balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of December 31, 2019, is exempt from Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) pricing requirements for the 2020-21 school year. This exemption does not include SFAs with a positive balance due to loans to the program. SFAs with a negative balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of the above designated date are required to complete the PLE tool and follow the requirements according to 7 CFR 210.14 (e) when establishing lunch prices for the 2020-2021 school year.

SFAs are required to report their paid lunch prices to the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Child Nutrition Unit (DESE, CNU) each year in accordance with 7 CFR 210.14 (e) (7). It is strongly encouraged, but not required, that exempt SFAs, at their own discretion, complete the PLE tool to determine their target price for SY 2020-21. Since this flexibility is granted on a yearly basis, completing the PLE tool and keeping it as a reference will be helpful should LEAs/SFAs require a price increase in the future.

SFAs must use their unrounded adjusted average paid lunch price requirement from SY 2019-20 when calculating the weighted average lunch price increase for SY 2020-21. For example, if the unrounded SY 2019-20 requirement was \$2.98 but the SFA opted to round down to \$2.95, the calculation of the SY 2020-21 requirement is based on the \$2.98 unrounded SY 2019-20 requirement.

Instructions for PLE Tool Completion

For SFAs with a negative balance:

1. Download the attached USDA PLE Tool and complete it using October 2019 paid LUNCH meal counts and paid lunch prices.
2. Retain the PLE report in the district along with supporting documents from October 2019 paid meal counts

For SFAs with a positive balance:

1. Download and complete the USDA PLE Tool using October 2019 paid lunch prices. (optional)
2. Attach a copy of the December 2019 APSCN report (period 6) indicating that the SFA had a zero or positive balance in the non-profit food service account as of December 31, 2019.

DESE, CNU will collect the required PLE information and Attestation Statement when the Agreement and Policy Statement is collected for the 2020-21 school year.

If you have questions regarding Paid Lunch Equity or the completion of the required documentation contact your Area Specialist at 501-324-9502.

Attachments

USDA Guidance SP 07-2020

Paid Lunch Equity Tool SY 20-21

Attachments

- [Paid_Lunch_Equity_Tool_SY_20-21_092936.xlsx](#)
- [USDA_Guidance_SP_07-2020_092950.pdf](#)