

DECEMBER 04, 1998

SUBJECT: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Policy Memorandum #9-99:
Meal Service to On-Track Students at Year-Round Sites

TO: Regional Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All Regions

This memorandum sets forth policy with regard to meals served to on-track children at year-round schools. It is a continuation, without any changes, of SFSP Policy Memorandum #9-98, issued on April 10, 1998. This memorandum is effective upon issuance, and will remain in effect until superseded by regulation or future memorandum.

When schools operate on a year-round, or continuous school calendar, the SFSP offers meals throughout the year to pre-school children and off-track students (i.e., year-round students on vacation at times other than the summer) in low-income areas. Recently, this office has received numerous questions concerning the year-round SFSP from administrators in States with large numbers of year-round schools. In particular, these questions have centered on whether year-round SFSP sites may serve school-age children during periods when these children are “on track,” or attending regularly scheduled classes, but are out of school for a short period. In response to these questions, we are issuing the following guidance.

The primary purpose in permitting year-round SFSP at Section 13(c) of the National School Lunch Act was to provide meal service to children in low-income areas during periods when a portion of the student body is on a non-traditional vacation break. When year-round SFSP sites are run as “open sites”--which are open to the entire community and are determined eligible on the basis of area school or census data--it is neither feasible nor required for staff at the year-round site to attempt to ensure that they do not serve meals to on-track students. In fact, during periods when year-round schools are closed for a short period (due to holidays, teacher workdays, etc.), sponsors of year-round sites can reasonably expect to serve meals to some on-track students who are on break, as well as the site’s regular preschool children and off-track students. In such cases, the sponsor should plan for or prepare additional meals and consider the possible need for additional site supervision. Only at enrolled year-round sites are site staff required to restrict the meal service to enrolled preschool children and off-track students.

Nevertheless, sponsors of open year-round SFSP sites located outside of schools must be responsible for establishing prudent operating procedures. When schools themselves serve as year-round SFSP sites, special caution must be exercised to avoid the possibility of the

school's "double-claiming" meals or claiming the higher per-meal SFSP rates for meals served in the School Programs. Schools that operate both the year-round SFSP and the School Programs should establish different meal services for the year-round and on-track populations, keep separate meal counts, and develop cost allocation plans for proper proration of overhead and administrative costs between the programs.

Please share this information with your State agencies. if you have any questions, pleas contact Melissa Rothstein or Ron Ulibarri.

/ORIGINAL SIGNED/

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