



**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**  
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NO: 5505

PAGE: 1 OF 4

CATEGORY: **Support Services, Food Services**

EFFECTIVE: **10-03-90**

SUBJECT: **Modified Meal Service for Students Enrolled  
in Special Education Programs**

REVISED: **2-18-03**

**A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

1. To outline administrative procedures covering provision of meal programs and special diets for students enrolled in special education programs.

**B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS**

1. **Reference:** Board policy: G-6000, H-7210; Education Code Sections 56135, 56136, 56363; Health and Safety Code; National School Lunch Act; School Breakfast Program.

**C. GENERAL**

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions regarding this procedure should be directed to the Food Services Department, Logistics Division, Business Operations Branch (regarding food handling practices and food/equipment sanitation) or to the Special Education Department (regarding student participation).

**D. IMPLEMENTATION**

1. **Student Identification.** Prior to the start of each new school year, school sites notify the Food Services Department Director of those students with disabilities who require special menus or food texture modification. During the school year, sites receiving students requiring special menus or food texture modification notify the Food Services Department Director prior to the students' first day of attendance.
2. **Food Services Preparation Kitchen Notification.** The special day class teacher, or other appropriate site personnel, notifies food services manager when modified menu service is needed. Food services area manager can be contacted at the preparation kitchen that provides food to that school site. Food services area manager is responsible for ensuring that appropriate meals are provided for special education students who require modified meal service.
3. **Meal Guidelines**
  - a. Special education students will eat the meals prepared for the general student population whenever possible. For students who require modified meal service with alteration of texture (generally, those limited cases who eat in the classroom), a "Mechanical Soft Menu" diet will be provided. Special education staff are responsible for further modifying the mechanical soft diet, if necessary,

to meet the needs of individual students. This may be accomplished by chopping, mashing, or pureeing the food. Meal modifications beyond a mechanical soft diet may result in service of a meal that does not meet the requirements of the National School Lunch Program. A physician's diet prescription will be required for these situations. If further menu adjustments are required, the menu systems development dietitian is contacted at (858) 627-7311 to evaluate the student and recommend a diet modification.

- b. Family style service can only be provided to a classroom equipped with refrigerated and heated holding equipment. Otherwise, individual tray service is provided.
  - c. Special sack lunches for field trips are available to students who need texture-modified diets. Arrangements for these lunches can be made by contacting food services area manager at least one week prior to the date of field trip. Special education staff are responsible for providing adequate equipment to maintain food temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Either refrigeration or a styrofoam chest packed with blue ice is recommended.
  - d. Meals will be provided from the "Mechanical Soft Menu." Food services area manager and food services manager will record service of these meals on the daily production records.
4. **Food Handling Practices.** Proper food handling practices will be followed at all times.
- a. Food may be taken to the classroom for further texture modification or for consumption by students only if hot foods can be held above 140 degrees Fahrenheit and cold foods held below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Foods that will be held outside of these criteria for more than 10 minutes must remain in the cafeteria until the student is served. Thermometers for testing food temperatures may be purchased at the San Diego Restaurant Supply, 1202 Market Street, San Diego, CA 92101. An acceptable thermometer is BiTherm #1236-32. This thermometer comes in a carrying case with a clip. It measures temperatures from 0 degree Fahrenheit to 220 degrees Fahrenheit in 20 degrees Fahrenheit increments. Cost is approximately \$7.
  - b. Personnel who modify meal textures must wear plastic gloves while processing food. School nurses and classroom personnel who prepare and/or serve food must pass a district test qualifying them to prepare and/or serve food within the

district. These individuals must be supervised in this activity by individuals who have completed an approved food service safety certification program.

5. **Food Handling Personnel.** All district personnel who prepare and/or serve food must have sanitation training. Area food services managers, food services managers, selected Special Education Department staff, and selected school nurses must complete an approved food service safety certification program. (San Diego County Department of Health Services maintains a list of current locations offering this course.) Personnel who prepare and/or serve food under the supervision of a qualified food service manager must successfully pass a district test qualifying them to prepare and/or serve food within the district.
6. **Equipment/Utensil Sanitation.** California Health and Safety Code requires that facilities used for food service utensil washing must be separate from facilities used for restroom and hand washing. All food handling and food service equipment must be properly washed and sanitized.
  - a. At sites where a dishwasher is located in the cafeteria, all cups, adapted eating utensils, and food preparation equipment will be washed and sanitized by food services workers. Special education staff will coordinate with food services staff for washing and sanitation of this equipment at the end of normal dishwashing activity.
  - b. At sites where no dishwasher is present, all adapted eating utensils and food preparation equipment will be washed and sanitized by special education staff according to the following procedure:
    - (1) Dishes and utensils will be washed by hand and then rinsed to remove soap or detergent. After this is accomplished, the dishes will be sanitized by the approved methods of immersing in a hot bleach solution (e.g., Clorox and Purex) and air-drying. Sanitize by immersing the dishes for not less than one minute in a sink filled with hot chlorine bleach solution. The sink must contain a solution equivalent to 200 parts per million of free chlorine. One tablespoon of bleach per sink of hot water is a minimum. Allow the utensils and dishes to air-dry. Do not use dish towels or cloths for drying, as this would cause recontamination. It is not necessary to sanitize serving trays that do not come in direct contact with food.
  - c. Special education staff are responsible for maintaining classroom stoves, microwave ovens, and refrigerators in a sanitary condition.

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**E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES**

1. Special Education Placement Form
2. Mechanical Soft Menu

**F. REPORTS AND RECORDS**

**G. APPROVED BY**



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Chief of Staff, Terrance L. Smith  
For the Superintendent of Public Education