United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
Mountain Plains Region
1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204-3585

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Reply to Attn. of: SP-00-11

Subject: Afterschool Snacks in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP): Additional Guidance on Area Eligibility of Sites

To: ALL STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - (Child Nutrition Programs) Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri ED, Montana OPI, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming

This memorandum addresses an issue that has arisen recently with respect to area eligibility of sites serving snacks in afterschool care programs, under the National School Lunch Program.

This guidance is meant to further articulate and illustrate the guidance put forth on area eligibility in our memoranda, SP 99-10, and Section B of SP 00-05.

An "area-eligible" site is one that will serve all children snacks free of charge, and claim all snacks in the free category. A site qualifies as area-eligible if the site is either a school (i.e., elementary, middle or high school) which has at least 50 percent or more of its enrollment eligible for free or reduced price meals, or is a site which is located within the attendance area of a school that qualifies. For our purpose, "attendance area" basically means a bounded geographic area within which students are assigned to attend one specific school, in that area, for their grade level.

One implication of this policy is that a school that does not meet the area-eligibility requirement based on its own school population may still be an area-eligible site if it is located in the attendance area of another school that does meet the area-eligibility requirement. This aspect of area eligibility is easy to understand in a situation where, for example, a middle school meets the area-eligibility requirement, but not all the elementary schools that are within its attendance area do. In this case every one of these elementary schools, irrespective of whether or not they are area-eligible based on their own student population, can participate as a site that is area-eligible,

simply because each of them is within the attendance area of the middle school. This is illustrated in Example 1 of the attachment, where the entire middle school attendance area is shaded over as area eligible, and includes each of the individual elementary schools.

A more common situation is one in which a middle school (or high school) is not area-eligible based on its own student population, but may be within the attendance area of another school, such as a nearby elementary school, that does meet the area-eligibility requirements. In this situation, in order for a middle school to qualify as a site established on the basis of an elementary school's area eligibility, the building that houses the middle school must be within the attendance area of the eligible elementary school.

To illustrate this, two contrasting situations are shown in Examples 2 and 3 of the attachment to the memorandum. In both of these examples Big Middle School does not meet the requirement for being area eligible based on its own school population. In Example 2, Holmes Elementary school does meet the area-eligibility requirement, and Big Middle School is located within the Holmes Elementary attendance area. This means Big Middle School can operate an area-eligible afterschool snack program in its building, on the basis of Holmes Elementary's area eligibility.

In Example 3, neither Big Middle School nor Holmes Elementary can meet the area-eligibility requirement. Happy Days Elementary does meet that requirement, but it is the only school site in this example that can operate an area-eligible afterschool care snack program. However, any non-school sites within its attendance area could be sponsored or operated as area-eligible sites by the school food authority.

In order to determine if a school that is not area eligible is in the attendance area of another school that is area-eligible, it is best to consult a map of the school district that shows the attendance area boundary lines for the various schools, and the locations of all the schools themselves. An alternative approach is to ask the school district central office to determine the names of the other schools whose attendance areas (as defined in the second paragraph of this section, above) encompass a particular school building. One way to approach this question is to ask, for example, "If there were a child of elementary school age who lived at the address of [Big Middle School], what elementary school would that child attend?" If the elementary school in question is not area-eligible, the

school district can then be asked what high school the child would attend, to see if it is area-eligible.

Be aware that if a school is located in an area where any family could choose among two or more schools in that area, individual school attendance areas, as defined in the second paragraph in this section, do not exist for those schools, and so "area eligibility" can be for the school only (see SP 00-05, question number B-5). In Example 4, families living within the large area (the attendance area for Big Middle School) may choose to send their elementary-aged children to any of the four elementary schools in that area. Therefore, even if Holmes Elementary school has 50 percent or more of its enrollment eligible for free and reduced price meals, it can only qualify its own building to serve all snacks free and claim them all free.

Please contact our office regarding any area-eligible site situations, hypothetical or actual, that you wish to discuss.

Stella Nash

STELLA NASH
Acting Regional Director
Child Nutrition Programs

Attachment

SP-00-11 Attachment **AREA-ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE SNACKS-**

EXAMPLES

Example 1:

Watson Elementary •	Holmes Elementary • BIG MIDDLE SCHOOL Ⓗ
Happy Days Elementary •	Friendly Elementary •

Example 2:

Watson Elementary •	Holmes Elementary • BIG MIDDLE SCHOOL Ⓗ
Happy Days Elementary •	Friendly Elementary •

Example 3:

Watson Elementary •	Holmes Elementary • BIG MIDDLE SCHOOL Ⓗ
Happy Days Elementary •	Friendly Elementary •

Example 4:

Watson Elementary •	Holmes Elementary • BIG MIDDLE SCHOOL Ⓗ
Happy Days Elementary •	Friendly Elementary •