

# *OSPI School Meal Programs Reference Sheet*

## Vending Machines in the School Meal Programs

The following material is intended to provide guidance for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that are considering the use of a vending machine to provide reimbursable meals in the National School Lunch (NSLP) and School Breakfast Programs (SBP). Prior to the use of vending machines to serve reimbursable meals, an LEA must receive approval from OSPI.

### Requirements

- Vending machines that provide reimbursable school meals are subject to all program regulations and represent an extension of the school food service area.
- School meal vending machines are subject to the same procedures, menu planning requirements, competitive food rules, and offer versus serve requirements that are applicable to meals offered on a service line with a cashier.
- Use of non-profit school food service account funds for obtaining and maintaining vending machines to provide reimbursable meals must be in accordance with all procurement regulations and procedures.
  - [Capital Expenditure Pre-Approval Request](#) must be submitted to OSPI prior to the purchase of equipment and other capital assets that exceed \$10,000.
- Contact the local health department for all food safety requirements prior to purchasing or using vending machines in the School Meal Programs.

### Approval Process for Vending Machines

- LEAs must request written approval from OSPI to implement vending machines in the School Meal Programs. Please submit a written procedure with the following information to your School Meals Program Specialist:
  - ✓ Describe how the system allows all eligibility categories to access the vending machine for a free, reduced-price, or paid meal and will yield an accurate claim for reimbursement.
  - ✓ Identify how the vending machine protects overt identification of students' eligibility status.
  - ✓ The process in place to ensure that second meals are not claimed for reimbursement.
  - ✓ Outline the forms of payment (i.e., cash, check, card) the vending machine will accept as payment for a meal and whether a student without funds can charge a meal.
  - ✓ Identify the breakfast and lunch meal service times for the vending machines.



- ✓ The menu planning process for the vending machine to dispense reimbursable meals that meet all meal pattern requirements, including milk variety and vegetable subgroup requirements.
- ✓ Describe how Offer verses Serve requirements will be met.

## References

- [SP 03-2007: Vending Machines in the School Meal Programs](#)
- [SP 13-2008: Use of Vending Machines in the School Meal Programs](#)
- [7 CFR 210.21](#)

## Resources

- [Equipment and Capital Expenditure Pre-Approval Request Form](#)
- [Optimizing Vending Machines](#)

## Acronym Reference

- CNS – Child Nutrition Services
- LEA – Local Education Agency
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- SBP – School Breakfast Program
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture