

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS POLICY

Special Dietary Needs for Students WITH Disabilities

- Student Nutrition Services is required to offer special meals, at no additional cost, to students whose disability restricts their diet as defined in USDA's nondiscrimination regulations, 7 CFR, Part 15b.
- A child with a disability must be provided substitutions of special foods, including special supplements, when a statement signed by "a recognized medical authority" (licensed physicians, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner) supports that need. "The Medical Statement to Request Special Meals" form must be signed by a recognized medical authority.
- The completion of the Medical Statement is required to ensure that the modified meal is reimbursable, and to ensure that any meal modifications meet nutrition standards that are medically appropriate for the child.
- Medical Statements are in effect until the condition changes or until the student transfers, promotes to a new school, or leaves the district. If the condition changes, a revised Medical Statement form signed by a recognized medical authority must be submitted.
- For children with disabilities who only require modifications in texture (such as chopped, ground, or pureed foods), a recognized medical authority's written instruction, indicating the appropriate food texture is required.

Special Dietary Needs of Students WITHOUT Disabilities

- Student Nutrition Services may make reasonable accommodations for students who are not disabled, but who are unable to consume a food item because of medical or other special dietary needs. Such determinations will be made on a case by case basis when supported by a statement (using the Medical Statement form), signed by a recognized medical authority (licensed physicians, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner). This provision covers those students who have allergies or food intolerance's but do not have life-threatening or anaphylactic reactions.

B.S.D. does not make meal accommodations based on personal preferences or religious convictions.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians must provide a completed Medical Statement form that includes the following:

- The student's disability or medical condition
- The diet prescription and/or accommodation including texture modifications and adaptive equipment, if needed
- The food(s) to be omitted and the suggested substitutions
- Which meal(s) the student will participate in (breakfast and/or lunch)
- Signature of appropriate medical authority and date

To ensure accurate meal service, parents are requested to:

- Help to ensure students identify themselves during meals. Students can say "Aloha" to staff at the beginning of the serve line to help confirm that their special meal is needed and received.
- Communicate the student's special dietary need to school staff when the student transfers or promotes to a different school or district.
- Communicate any dietary change as prescribed by medical authority.
- Notify teachers, principals or after school activities/programs, regarding your child's allergy/disability.

Our policy, special meal request forms and Q & A's are also available at Beardsleyschool.org

Please contact us at (661) 392-8758 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this information.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: My child has a dairy allergy. How do I arrange for milk-free foods?

A: Please provide a signed Medical Statement from a “medical authority” (nurse practitioner, licensed physician or physician’s assistant). Food items that contain dairy such as cheese, yogurt or ranch salad dressing can be omitted or appropriate substitutions made if the specific foods are identified on the medical statement. There is no beverage substitution available for milk unless the student has a disability. Parents are encouraged to provide students with an appropriate beverage alternative from home. Water fountains are available at every school.

Q: My child is lactose intolerant. What can Nutrition Services provide for my child?

A: There is no beverage substitution available for milk unless the student has a disability. Parents are encouraged to provide students with an appropriate beverage alternative from home. Water fountains are available at every school.

Q: Our family is vegetarian. Are vegetarian lunches provided?

A: Sun-butter sandwiches are available if requested ahead of time. Vegetarian options are also available during the week and on the Junior High salad bar. Families following strict vegan regimes may need to provide lunch items from home.

Q: My child is trying to lose weight. What options are available in the school cafeteria?

A: Portion sizes are standardized and don’t permit “super sizing.” Menus are planned to provide the proper calorie and nutrient content for children within each grade range.

Q: What if I disagree with the schools decision?

A: You should talk to school officials. You may also ask for a hearing by calling or writing to:

Anne Lerma, Director Student Nutrition: 1001 Roberts Lane Bakersfield, CA 93308

Q: My child has special dietary needs. How does Student Nutrition Services provide for them?

A: See details above on this page. For additional and more specific information, contact the Student Nutrition office at (661) 392-8758.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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