

Board of Education
Follow-Up Budget Questions – Food & Nutrition Services
6/9/2021

Question: Can you please share the impacts of the extension of free meals/snacks for every student for the 2021-2022 school year, plus the extension of the waivers on the requirement that students eat at school (off-site, take-home)?

Answer: Our overall participation is down approximately 50%. We did see an increase with the implementation of the hybrid model. The biggest decline is in our middle and high schools. Having the ability for parents to pick up meals, and students to take home meals does help offset the decrease in participation. The loss of a la carte sales has had a very negative impact on our budget.

In FY2022, all FCPS students will receive free breakfast and lunch seven days per week. We are waiting from MSDE on the supper meal program. Supper meals are not currently included in the FY2022 FNS operating budget.

Question: How does this impact FNS budget? Do we receive a flat reimbursement from USDA for all students, or do students have to take the meal(s) to get reimbursed?

Answer: We receive a per meal reimbursement from USDA for breakfast, for lunch, for supper, and snacks that are actually served. We must account for every meal produced, and served to receive the reimbursement. Those rates are set forth by USDA as part of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The breakfast reimbursement is \$2.46, and lunch reimbursement is \$4.31.

Question: Is there the intention to serve hot meals in the Fall or stick with grab-n-go because of COVID?

Answer: FCPS has received approval from the Frederick County Health Department to return to typical service in FY2022. In preparation for the August reopening, FNS is planning menus and meal service to pre-pandemic service standards. We will be offering our burrito bar in many secondary schools; meal stations in secondary schools; and up to 3-4 daily entrée choices at our elementary schools.

Question: Are we still selling ala carte items?

Answer: We are offering a minimal amount of a la carte items in middle and high schools only. We have found it very challenging in receiving the product from our vendors. At this time, minimal production is taking place on K-12 a la carte items. We are planning on expanding in August and closely working with our vendors for our anticipated needs.

Question: Do we have sufficient labor to feed every student every meal? Do we need to make hires and extend hours?

Answer: This is one area that is very challenging. We are actively advertising positions, calling employees that have not returned, and have had minimal responses. We are offering existing employees additional time to fill these vacant slots. Most employees are grateful for the

additional time. In working with our non-benefited employees, we are working with their schedules. If they are only available 2 or 3 days a week, we are being flexible with them and their needs. We are actively reviewing the needs of each school daily, and we do move employees from one school to another to satisfy those needs.

Question: May you walk through the budget increases?

Answer: The FY2022 FNS operating budget reflects revenue and expense based upon our pre-pandemic meal counts and staffing models. Our FY2021 budget reflected on a portion of our typical meal count.

Question: How are we reimburse for staffing costs associated with serving more meals/students?

Answer: USDA reimbursement is based upon meal count. This reimbursement covers supplies and labor. The FNS staffing model is based upon the anticipated number of meals to be served to account for this reimbursement. The USDA will be reimbursing LEAs through the National School Lunch Program in FY2022, but they will be reimbursing at the Summer Food Service Program reimbursement rate, which is \$0.80 higher per lunch. Typical lunch reimbursement is \$3.51; FY2022 lunch reimbursement is \$4.31.