

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

June 14, 2022

SUBJECT:

Increase in Meal Prices for 2022 - 2023 School Year

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) states that schools are required to charge students for paid meals at a price that is, on average, equal to the difference between free meal reimbursement and paid meal reimbursement. Schools that currently charge less are required to gradually increase their prices until they meet the requirement. The USDA created the paid lunch equity (PLE) tool to determine whether pricing requirements are being met and, if not met, the increase required to meet pricing requirements.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

Students have avoided meal fees (excluding a la carte items) over the past two years due to Covid-related Federal funding. Those programs end at June 30, 2022.

Utilizing Aiken-specific information for the number of paid lunches and paid lunch prices and also considering prior year information, the tool calculates a \$0.37 increase for 2022 – 2023. However, the District can choose to go up a required minimum of \$0.10 with the expectation of subsequent years’ increases to make up the difference, or amount in between.

With inflation and increasing operating costs in mind, a \$0.25 increase is requested. This increase would split the difference between the minimum required increase and the PLE result. In addition, a \$0.10 increase for extra milk is requested. If approved, meal fees would increase as show below:

	<u>Current Price</u>	<u>Proposed 2022 - 2023 Price</u>
Lunch - Elementary	\$ 2.60	\$ 2.85
Lunch - Middle & High	\$ 2.75	\$ 3.00
Breakfast	\$ 1.75	\$ 2.00
Extra Milk	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.60

The last meal increase was a \$0.15 increase for the 2018 – 2019 school year.

Students at the community eligibility provision (CEP) schools will continue to eat reimbursable meals free of charge. Those 20 CEP schools are: Lever Elementary, East Aiken Elementary, Oakwood-Windsor Elementary, North Aiken Elementary, Aiken Elementary, Schofield Middle, Mossy Creek Elementary, Clearwater Elementary, Gloverville Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Warrenton Elementary, Graniteville Elementary, LBC Middle, Busbee Elementary, RSM Elementary, Corbett Middle, Wagener-Salley High, RSM Middle-High, Greendale Elementary, and Redcliffe Elementary.

The State establishes minimum prices for adult meals. Adult meals will increase by the greater of an amount comparable to the increase in student meals, or the new State minimum.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approve the increase in meal prices as indicated.

PREPARED BY:

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