MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 23, 2010

TO: Administration

FROM: Tammy Hodge, Controller

SUBJECT: Provision of Food, Beverages, or Refreshments to Staff and Parents

The Attorney General’s Office recently issued Opinion No. 110-003, regarding a District’s provision of food, beverages, or refreshments to staff and parents.

The opinion states that a District may provide food, beverages or refreshments to staff or parents who assist in governing board-authorized District activities after normal school hours or on weekends, only and to the extent it is authorized to do so by the laws pertaining to travel and subsistence, gifts, grants (including federal grants). Food provided during the school day would follow the same guidelines.

Please note that the laws pertaining to travel specifically state that for an employee or parent (designated as a representative of the District) to be eligible for meals, the traveler must travel outside a radius of 50 miles from the traveler’s duty post and the normal workday must be extended by at least 2 hours. Maximum amounts set for each meal would apply based on time of day that the meal began. Therefore, it is clear that when school district staff or parents attend meetings or other activities at their designated post of duty, residence or within 50 miles of their work location they are not entitled to subsistence.

An exception to this rule is made only for Federal grants or gifts that specify that the monies may be expended for food and beverages for staff, parents or volunteers.

School districts must ensure that any allowable expenditure of funds for refreshments does not constitute a gift of public funds (in other words, the meal or refreshment cost cannot be greater than what is received in return from the individual getting the food).

Because of these new guidelines, options for providing food or beverages at meetings will be limited, but may include the following:
- Using monies collected from the vending machines that are only utilized by District staff members (generally located in the staff lounge).
- Charging participants a refreshment fee.
- At the first Open House of the year Campus Administration may offer the students and parents a meal through the Cafeteria as a marketing initiative to introduce them to the National School Lunch Program. This will require coordination with the Food Services Director.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ext. 41410.