***FAQ on School Meal Applications — handout or template website language to customize.***

Our district offers school meals through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Depending on a family’s income, these meals could be provided to your child free of charge or at a reduced price. To see if your child is eligible, please complete a school meals application.

SUBMIT A SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATION TODAY!

1. Help provide **essential funding** for your school & community.
2. Become eligible for **free or reduced-price meals** and **Pandemic-EBT.**
3. Become eligible for **fee waivers** such as SAT registration & band instrument fees.
4. Receive benefits **regardless of citizenship status.**

*What you need to know:*

**Why should I submit an application?**

In addition to determining eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals, school meals applications help our school district allocate vital funding and resources to schools. School meals applications also grant your child access to other benefits, such as Pandemic EBT (P-EBT), [insert other examples in your district]. For these reasons, please complete the school meals application. Applications are completely confidential and secure, and do not require Social Security information.

**When should I apply, and do I submit a separate application for each child?**

Families can apply for free or reduced-price school meals at any time during the school year. Families can also reapply later in the school year if there is a change in family circumstances, such as loss of income. Each family needs to submit one application for all of the children attending schools in the same district; however, families must submit a new application each school year. To apply, go to: [insert information and link if available].

**Who is eligible to receive free or reduced-price school meals?**

Eligibility is based on household income. Determinations are based on comparing a family’s income to the federal income guidelines through school meal applications. In addition, children whose households participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or if they are classified as homeless, runaway, or migrant, are eligible.

**I receive benefits through WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children). Can my child get free meals?**

Many children in WIC households may be eligible for free school meals. Please fill out an application to confirm your child’s eligibility.

**Does my or my child’s immigration status matter for submitting school meals applications?**

Neither you nor your child needs to be a U.S. citizen in order to gain access to free or reduced-price school meals. Applications are completely confidential and secure; they do not require a Social Security number, and they have no effect on the public charge rule.

**Are applications available in other languages?**

Applications are available in English, [insert languages if applicable].

**If we already get free meals because of the pandemic, do we still need to submit a school meals application?**

Yes. When schools start operating meal programs by using more traditional models, having your child’s application on hand will ensure a smooth transition from one meal service program to another and without disrupting your child’s access to healthy school meals. Further, some school funding during the pandemic is still reliant on the collection of school meals applications, which means that your child’s school stands to gain even more resources to further your child’s education during these difficult times.

**Where do I fill out an application?**

The school district has the application posted online here [insert website]. Parents can also go to the school office (if open) for a physical school meal application