

FREE and REDUCED-PRICE MEAL INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. The East Rochester SD offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast is available districtwide and costs \$1.25; lunch costs \$2.50. Your children might qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The reduced price is 25 cents for breakfast and 25 cents for lunch. To apply for free or reduced-price meals, you can **apply online** at www.erschools.org OR submit a Free Meals Eligibility letter from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance/NYS Education Department OR complete and sign the enclosed application, and return it to the ER School Nutrition Office, 222 Woodbine Ave., East Rochester, NY 14445. Please refer to the guidelines in this letter when completing the application. **We cannot process an incomplete application, so be sure to filloutallrequiredinformation.** ***NOTE: You can apply online only once per school year; paper applications must be used if you wish to re-apply for benefits later in the school year.***

- 1. Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Complete only ONE application for all students in your household to apply for free or reduced-price meals. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information.
- 2. Who can get free meals?** All children in households receiving benefits from SNAP (Food Stamps), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household's gross income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
- 3. Can foster children get free meals?** Yes, foster children who are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income.
- 4. Can homeless, runaway, and migrant children get free meals?** Yes, children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant qualify for free meals. If you haven't been notified by the school that your children will get free meals, please call 248-6332 to see if they qualify.
- 5. Who can get reduced-price meals?** Your children can get low-cost meals if your household income is within the reduced-price limits on the Federal Eligibility Income Chart shown on this application.
- 6. Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free meals?** Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. Call the school at 248-6398 if you have questions.
- 7. My child(ren)'s application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out another one this year?** Yes. Your child's application is good only for that school year and for the first 30 days of this school year. You must send in a new application each school year unless you've already received notification from the ER School Nutrition Office that your child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals this school year.
- 8. I receive WIC. Can my child(ren) get free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC **might** be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please fill out and submit an application.
- 9. Will the information I give be checked?** Yes, and you might also be asked to send in written proof.
- 10. If I don't qualify now, can I apply later?** Yes. You can apply any time during the school year if your household size goes up or income goes down, you become unemployed, or you start getting SNAP, TANF, or other benefits. *NOTE: If your income goes down or you start receiving SNAP or TANF benefits, you will be required to submit proof of your new income amount, or a copy of your benefit letter or Eligibility Letter for Free Meals from the NYS Education Department.*
- 11. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?** You should talk to school officials. You can also ask for a hearing by contacting Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations David Green at ER Schools, 222 Woodbine Ave., East Rochester, NY 14445, 248-6308, or dave.green@erschools.org.
- 12. Can I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?** Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
- 13. Who should I include as members of my household?** You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends) who share income and expenses. You must include yourself and all children living with you. If you live with other people who are economically independent (for example, people you do not support, who do not share income with you or your children, and who pay a pro-rated share of expenses), do not include them.
- 14. What if my income isn't always the same?** List the amount you regularly receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and made only \$900, put down \$1000 per month. If you regularly get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you work overtime only sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
- 15. We are in the military. Do we include our housing allowance as income?** If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
- 16. My spouse is deployed to a combat zone. Is his/her combat pay counted as income?** No. If it is received in addition to their basic pay because of their deployment and it wasn't received before they were deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact the school for more information.
- 17. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we can apply for?** To find out how to apply for SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-342-3009.

Howtoapply: To get free or reduced-price meals for your children you can **submit an Eligibility Letter for Free Meals** from the NYS Education Department, **OR carefully complete one application** for your household and return it to the ER School Nutrition Office, **OR apply online** at www.erschools.org. NOTE: You can apply online only once per school year; paper applications must be used if you wish to re-apply for benefits later in the school year. If you now receive SNAP (Food Stamps) or TANF for any children, or participate in the FDPIR, the application must include the children's names, the household SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number, and the signature of an adult household member. All children should be listed on the same application. If you do not list a SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number for all children for whom you are applying, the application must include the names of everyone in the household, the amount of income for each household member, and how often it is received and where it comes from. It must also include the signature of an adult household member and the last four digits of that adult's Social Security number, or check the box if the adult doesn't have a Social Security number. An incomplete application cannot be approved. Contact your local Department of Social Services for your SNAP or TANF case number, or complete the income portion of the application.

Reportingchanges: The benefits you are approved for at the time of application are effective for the entire school year. You no longer need to report an increase in income or decrease in household size, or if you no longer receive SNAP.

Income exclusions: The value of any childcare provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such childcare or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care under the Child Care Development (Block Grant) Fund, should not be considered as income for this program.

Nondiscriminationstatement: *This explains what to do if you believe you've been treated unfairly.* In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by the USDA. 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 or hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities, may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information can be made available in languages other than English. Tofileaprogramcomplaintofdiscrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, 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 Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

Mealservicetochildrenwithdisabilities: Federal regulations require schools and institutions to serve meals at no extra charge to children with a disability which might restrict their diet. A student with a disability is defined in 7CFR Part 15b.3 of federal regulations as one who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (defined to include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working). You must request the special meals from the school and provide the school with medical certification from a medical doctor. If you believe your child needs substitutions because of a disability, please contact us for further information, as there is specific information the medical certification must contain.

Confidentiality: The USDA has approved the release of students' names and eligibility status, without parent/guardian consent, to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of federal education programs such as Title I and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which are U.S. Department of Education programs used to determine areas such as the allocation of funds to schools, to evaluate socioeconomic status of the school's attendance area, and to assess educational progress. Information can also be released to state health or education programs administered by the state or local education agency (provided the agency administers the program), and federal, state, or local nutrition programs similar to the National School Lunch Program. Additionally, all information contained in the free and reduced-price application can be released to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act or Child Nutrition Act (including the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, the Special Milk Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children); the Comptroller General of the United States for audit purposes; and federal, state, or local law enforcement officials investigating alleged violation of the programs under the NSLA or CNA.

Reapplication: You can apply for benefits any time during the school year. Also, if you are not eligible now, but during the school year become unemployed, or have a decrease in household income or an increase in family size, you can request and complete an application at that time. NOTE: If you have already applied once and your income goes down or you start receivingSNAPorTANFbenefits,you'll be required to submit proof of your new income amount or a copy of your benefit letter or Eligibility Letter for Free Meals from the NYS Education Department.

The disclosure of eligibility information not specifically authorized by the NSLA requires a written consent statement from the parent/guardian. **The School Nutrition Office will notify you in writing by mail when your application is processed and either approved or denied.**

Sincerely, *Mark D. Linton*

Dr. Mark Linton, Superintendent of Schools

	household size	annual	monthly	twice-monthly	every two weeks	weekly
	1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$916	\$846	\$423
REDUCEDPRICE	2	29,637	2,470	1,235	1,140	570
ELIGIBILITY	3	37,296	3,108	1,554	1,435	718
INCOMECHART	4	44,955	3,747	1,874	1,730	865
(effective July 1, 2016-	5	52,614	4,385	2,193	2,024	1,012
June 30, 2017)	6	60,273	5,023	2,512	2,319	1,160
	7	67,951	5,663	2,832	2,614	1,307
	8	75,647	6,304	3,152	2,910	1,455
For each additional family member add		7,696	642	321	296	148