

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Sylvania Schools** offers healthy meals every school day.

Due to the Covid pandemic: Beginning the school year 2020-2021 the US government authorized each student in the United States to receive 1 full breakfast and 1 full lunch free each school day. At this time, the pandemic free school meal program will continue for the 2021-2022 school year, but does not waive or reduce other school fees.

When the above program ends, breakfast costs **\$2.00**; lunch costs **\$3.00 elementary/\$3.25 junior and senior high school**. **Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.** Reduced price is **\$.30** for breakfast and **\$.40** for lunch. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

➤ *Who can get FREE or REDUCED PRICE meals?*

- All children in households receiving benefits from **Ohio SNAP, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)] or Ohio TANF**, are eligible for free meals.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.

1. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY?

Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangements? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail **Bob Verhelst, Student Services Director, 419-824-8583** or bverhelst@sylvaniaschools.org

2. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?

No. Fill out one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all Sylvania School district students in your household.

3. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?

No, but please read the email you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Tami May, Student Nutrition, Sylvania Schools, 419-824-8655 or tmay@sylvaniaschools.org immediately.

4. DO I APPLY ONLINE?

Yes! Due to COVID-19, families need to complete an online application instead of a paper application. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Applying online is a faster, more secure way to apply. Visit www.sylvaniaschools.org click on departments and then click on the Student Nutrition link and select the hyperlink for the online application to begin the online application process. Contact Tami May, Student Nutrition, 419-824-8655 tmay@sylvaniaschools.org if you have any questions about, or need help with, the online application process.

5. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE?

Yes! Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first 30 days of the next school year. Temporary status expiration date for the 2021-2022 school year is: September 27th, 2021.

You must fill out a new application for every new school year. If you do not fill out a new application and do not receive approval by the school district that your student/students are eligible for free or reduced priced meals, your child may be charged the full price for all meals.

6. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?

Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please fill out an online application.

7. WILL THE INFORMATION FROM MY APPLICATION BE CHECKED FOR ACCURACY?

Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.

8. IF I DO NOT QUALIFY NOW, WILL I BE ABLE TO APPLY LATER?

Yes, you may apply at *any* time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if there is a reduction in household income. When in doubt...fill it out!

9. WHAT IF I DISAGREE ON THE DECISION OF AWARDING BENEFITS?

You should talk to Student Nutrition office officials. You also may ask for a hearing by writing or emailing:
Ray Holston Student Nutrition Supervisor, Sylvania Schools, 7400 Cougar Lane, Sylvania Ohio 43560, 419-824-8511,
rholston@sylvaniaschools.org

10. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSE IS NOT A CITIZEN?

Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price meals.

11. WHAT IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE NO INCOME TO REPORT?

Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 (zero) in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

12. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY; DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY?

Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.

13. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP, ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO GET HELP?

To find out how to apply for **Ohio SNAP** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call Ohio Job and Family Services at 1-866-244-0071.

If you have other questions or need help, feel free to reach out to myself or Tami May, Student Nutrition Office Secretary at 419-824-8655 or email: tmay@sylvaniaschools.org

Ray Holston
Student Nutrition Supervisor
Ph: 419-824-8511
rholston@sylvaniaschools.org

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