

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Over the last two school years, the USDA has allowed school food service departments to use waivers to offer meals to all students free of charge. For the 2023-2024 school year, the waiver is no longer available.

Families will once again be asked to complete and submit a current school year, Free & Reduced Meal Application if they would like to see if their students qualify based on the income of all family members. The 2023-2024 Free & Reduced Meal application is available at [payschoolscentral.com](https://payschoolscentral.com). Parents may begin filling out the 2023-2024 form now. You will need to create an account, if you haven't already done so, and will need your student's full given name (William, not Billy) & your student's ID number. The ID number is their lunch account number.

If you do not know your student's ID number, please email Jennifer Sanders @ [sandersj@bathwildcats.org](mailto:sandersj@bathwildcats.org) with your student's name & a return email will follow.

I encourage families who may even remotely think they may qualify for free or reduced price meals to apply.

Below are the 2023-2024 school meal prices:

Breakfast	Lunch:
Free to those who qualify	Free to those who qualify
Reduced priced: \$0.30	Reduced priced: \$0.40
Full pay grades K-12 \$1.75	Full pay grades K-5 \$3.00
	Full pay grades 6-8 \$3.25
	Full pay grades 9-12 \$3.50

Deposits to your student's account can be made as frequent as you would like. We accept cash, checks made out to Bath Schools with your student's ID number on the memo line, & online payments at [payschoolscentral.com](https://payschoolscentral.com).

Payschools Central offers an auto replenish option that parents can sign up for. This option will automatically deduct a predetermined amount of money from your credit/debit card & add the money to your student's account balance. All fees set by Payschools Central apply to this option.

Also offered by PaySchools Central is a free email balance reminder. Parents can set an amount which triggers an email reminder to send in money.

Beginning this school year, School Messenger will be sending an automated message to any student whose account balance has slipped into the negative.

The decision to place the full pay prices where they are, was a hard decision and based on the following set of circumstances.

The USDA requires all food service departments to be self-supporting business within the school district. The food service department must pay all food, supplies, labor, benefits, equipment purchases, equipment maintenance,

administrative costs, etc. out of the lunch money that is received from student's paying for their meals & the per meal reimbursement received from the Federal Government based on the number of meals served. The food service department does not receive any money from the school district to cover these costs.

The food service department is looking at price increases upwards of 18% for the 23-24 school year.

The food supply chain issue is still a problem. School food service items will be the last to recover from supply chain issues. There is very little profit for food manufacturers in the school food industry. Therefore, manufacturers will produce for groceries and restaurants before school specific items. School food service must follow specific size, nutritional, and procurement specifications as set by laws and regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [sandersj@bathwildcats.org](mailto:sandersj@bathwildcats.org) or at 419-221-0807 ext. 2197.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sanders

Food Service Supervisor

Bath Local Schools