

## PUBLIC RELEASE

Sylvania Schools announced its 2023-2024 program year policy for free and reduced-price meals for students unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Act. The Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines will be used for determining eligibility for families whose annual income is at or below the Federal Guidelines or families that are on the SNAP or OWF program(s) are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

- At this time, applications need to be submitted online and will be available **after August 1, 2023 for the 2023-2024 school year**. To apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits, households should fill out the online application at: <http://www.sylvaniaschools.org/FoodService.aspx> and then click the Online Application link on that page. A completed application is required, **annually**, to receive benefits. Households which currently receive Special Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) or Ohio Works First (OWF) funds for a child must provide the child's name, the SNAP or OWF case number and signature of an adult household member on the application. Households which do not receive SNAP or OWF funds must provide the names of all household members, the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the adult signing the application or state "none" if the adult does not have a Social Security Number, the amount and source of income received by each household member, (state the monthly income) and the signature of an adult household member. If any of this information is missing, the application cannot be processed.
- The information provided on the Free and Reduced Meal application is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program official. To discourage the possibility of misrepresentation, the application form contains a statement above the space for signature certifying that all information furnished is true and correct. Applications are being made in connection with the receipt of federal funds. Schools or other officials may check the information on the application at any time during the school year. Deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable state and federal laws.
- Households will be notified of the approval or denial of meal benefits via the email address provided. If no email address is provided, the letter will be mailed. *Please* send funds with the student to school for food until your letter is received.
- Foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits regardless of the household's income. If a family has foster children living with them and wishes to apply for such meals, fill out the online application and indicate "foster" on the application.
- Under the provision of the policy, the Student Nutrition Secretary will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the decision on the application or the result of verification, the decision may be discussed with the determining official on an informal basis. If a formal appeal is desired, the household has the right to a fair hearing. A fair hearing can be requested either orally or in writing to: Ray Holston, Student Nutrition Director: 7400 Cougar Lane, Sylvania, Ohio 43560. Phone number: 419-824-8511.
- Households may apply for benefits **any** time during the school year but before the last month of the school year. If a household is not currently eligible but the household size increases or income decreases because of unemployment or other reasons, the family should file a new application. Such changes may make the children of the family eligible for free or reduced-price benefits if the family income falls at or below the income eligibility guidelines.

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