

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Saydel Community School District offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs **\$1.60-\$1.80**; lunch costs **\$2.55-\$2.90** for secondary (High School and Jr. High School). Your child(ren) may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals. Reduced price is \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch. This packet includes an application for free or reduced price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

**1. Who can get free or reduced price meals?**

- All children in households receiving benefits from SNAP, FDIPIR, or 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 participating in their school's Head Start program 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. Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

Income Eligibility Reduced-Price Guidelines—July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017					
Family Size	Annually	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	21,978	1,832	916	846	423
2	29,637	2,470	1,235	1,140	570
3	37,296	3,108	1,554	1,435	718
4	44,955	3,747	1,874	1,730	865
5	52,614	4,385	2,193	2,024	1,012
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
<i>For each additional family member add:</i>					
	7,696	642	321	296	148

- 2. Who can get free milk?** If your school participates in the Special Milk Program for half day kindergarteners, your kindergarten child may be eligible for free milk. Children who buy extra milk with a meal or if they have an afternoon milk break are not eligible to receive free milk.
- 3. 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 arrangement? 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 Julie McKibben at [mckibbenjulie@saydel.net](mailto:mckibbenjulie@saydel.net).
- 4. What is we have foster children?**  
Households with foster and non-foster children may choose to include the foster child as a household member, as this may help other children in the household qualify for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits, that does not prevent a foster child from receiving free meal benefits.
- 5. Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. The student identification number and the child(ren)'s date of birth are not required by NSLP, SBP or SMP. Return the completed application to: Jessy Sadler, 5740 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50313, 515-264-0866.
- 6. 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 letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Jessy Sadler, 5740 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50313, 515-264-0866 immediately.
- 7. Can I apply online?** Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Visit [www.saydel.k12.ia.us](http://www.saydel.k12.ia.us) to begin or to learn more about the online application process. If you prefer to fill out a paper application instead, they can be found at the front desk of all buildings or online at: [www.saydel.k12.ia.us](http://www.saydel.k12.ia.us). Return the completed application to: Jessy Sadler, 5740 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50313, 515-264-0866.
- 8. 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 few days of this school year, through 9/21/2016. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not send in a new application that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full price for meals.
- 9. I currently receive Food Assistance or FIP benefits, do I need to fill out an application?** Children in households participating in FIP benefits may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please send in an application. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact: Jessy Sadler at 515-264-0866 immediately as eligibility for free meals is extended to all school age children in a household. If you did not receive a letter from the school, but received a Free Lunch Notice from DHS, submit this signed letter to: Jessy Sadler at 5740 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50313. You may add any students living in your household who are not listed.
- 10. Will the information I give be checked?** Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
- 11. If I don't qualify now, may I 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 the household income drops below the income limit.
- 12. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?** You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Jessy Sadler, 5740 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50313, 515-264-0866.
- 13. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. 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. Translated materials can be found at: [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/translated-applications](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/translated-applications)
- 14. What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
- 15. 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 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.
- 16. 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.

17. **What if there isn't enough space on the application for my family?** List any additional household members on a Supplemental Worksheet, and attach it to your application. See page 3 of application.
18. **My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for Food Assistance or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-877-347-5678. Your children may be eligible for hawk-i (children's health insurance) or a waiver of school fees.
19. **Can children with disabilities get food substitutions?** If a child has a disability, as determined by a licensed medical professional, and the disability prevents the child from eating the regular school meal, the school will make substitutions prescribed by the licensed medical professional. If a substitution is needed, there will be no extra charge for the meal. Please note, however, that the school is not required to make a substitution for a food allergy, unless it meets the definition of disability. Please call the school for further information.

If you have other questions or need help, call or email 515-264-0866, sadlerjessy@saydel.net.

Sincerely,

**Jessy Sadler, Director of Food Services, Saydel Community School District**

**Privacy Act Statement: This explains how we will use the information you give us.** The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

**Non-Discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 1-800-795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Iowa Discrimination Statement:** "It is the policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.6, 216.7, and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office building, 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> St. Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; website: <https://icrc.iowa.gov/>."