

A LETTER TO PARENTS ABOUT SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Coxsackie-Athens Central School District offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast cost \$1.20, lunch costs \$2.10 in grades 5-12 and \$1.90 in Grades K-4. Children from households that meet Federal income guidelines (outlined below) are eligible for free meals or reduced price meals. Reduced price meals cost each eligible student \$.25 for lunch and \$.25 for breakfast. To apply for free or reduced price meals, submit a direct Certification letter from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance OR complete the enclosed application, sign it, and return it to the school as soon as possible. Please refer to the guidelines contained in this letter when completing the application. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information.

1. **Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced price meals. Do not fill out more than one application for your household.
2. **Who can get free meals?** Children in households getting Food Stamps or TANF and most foster children can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Guidelines. Each foster child must be listed on a separate application, with Part 2 completed and include an adult signature.
3. **Can homeless, runaway and migrant children get free meals?** Please call Theodore Nugent at 731-1732 to see if your child(ren) qualify, if you have not been informed that they will get free meals.
4. **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 Income Chart, shown on this application.
5. **Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free or reduced price meals?** Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. Call the school if you have questions.
6. **I get WIC, can my child(ren) get free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out application.
7. **Will the information I give be checked?** The school may ask you at any time during the school year to verify your eligibility. You will be notified, in writing, if you have been selected for Verification. School officials may ask you to send papers showing that your child should receive free or reduce price meals at the time you applied.
8. **If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start getting Food stamps, TANF or other benefits. If you lose your job, your children may be able to get free or reduced price meals.
9. **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 : Leslie Copleston, Chief Financial Officer, 24 Sunset blvd. Coxsackie, NY 12051, 731-1715.
10. **May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?** Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be a U.S. citizen to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
11. **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). You must include yourself and all children who live with you.
12. **What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally get. For example, if you normally get \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only got \$900, put down that you get \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get it only sometimes.

How to Apply: To get free or reduced price meals for your children you may submit a **Direct Certification letter received from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, OR carefully complete the application** and return it to the school. If you now receive food stamps, or Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for any children, or participate in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), the application must include the children's names, the household food stamp, ADC/TANF or FDPIR number and the signature of an adult household member. All children with the same case number may be listed on the same application. Separate applications are required for children with different case numbers. If you do not list a food stamp/ADC/TANF or FDPIR number for all the children for whom you are applying, the application must include the names of everyone in the household, the amount of income each household member got last month and where it comes from, and the signature of an adult household member and that adult's social security number, or the word "none" if the adult does not have a social security number. An application that is not complete cannot be approved. Contact your local Department of Social Services for your food stamp or TANF number or complete the income portion of the application.

Income Chart: The following chart lists income levels according to household size and income levels received either yearly, monthly or weekly. If your total household income is the same or less than the amounts on the Income Chart below, your child(ren) may be eligible to receive free or reduced price meals.

REDUCED PRICE ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART
Effective from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Household Size	Annual	Month	Week
1	\$...20,036	\$ 1,670	\$ 386
2	...26,955	2,247	519
3	...33,874	2,823	652
4	...40,793	3,400	785
5	...47,712	3,976	918
6	...54,631	4,553	1,051
7	...61,550	5,130	1,184
8	...68,469	5,706	1,317
For each additional family member add	+.. 6,919	+ 555	+ 134

Reporting Changes: The benefits that you are approved for at the time of application are effective for the entire school year. **You no longer need to report changes for an increase in income or decrease in household size, or if you no longer receive food stamps.**

Income Exclusions: The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care 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.

Nondiscrimination: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. *To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.D. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-5382 (TTY). USDA. Is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Meal Service to Children With Disabilities: Federal regulations require schools and institutions to serve meals at no extra charge to children with a disability which may 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..." Major life activities are defined to include functions such as caring for one's self, 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 get in touch with us for further information, as there is specific information that the medical certification must contain

Confidentiality: The United States Department of Agriculture 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 (NAEP), which are United States 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 may also be released to State health or State education programs administered by the State agency or local education agency, provided the State or local education agency administers the program, and federal, State or location nutrition programs similar to the National School Lunch Program. Additionally, *all* information contained in the free and reduced price application may be released to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) or Child Nutrition Act (CNA); including the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, the Special Milk Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); 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.

The disclosure of eligibility information not specifically authorized by the NSLA requires a written consent statement from the parent/guardian.

Sincerely,

Earle S. Gregory, Superintendent of Schools