

August 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Regional School District #13 offers a choice of healthy meals each school day. Children may buy lunch for \$2.75. Children who qualify under U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines may get meals free or at a reduced price of \$.40 for lunch. All meals served must meet nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If a child has a disability, as determined by a doctor, and the disability prevents the child from eating the regular school meal, the school will make substitutions prescribed by the doctor. If a substitution is needed, there will be no extra charge for the meal. Please call the school for further information.

How do I get free or reduced price school meals for my child? You can get benefits in one of two ways. You must either complete the free and reduced price meal application and return it to the school, or bring in a letter from the Department of Social Services.

If your total household income is the same or below the amount on the Reduced Price Income Chart (at right), your child may get either free meals or reduced price meals.

Your child can get free school meals if you get benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as Food Stamps or Temporary Family Assistance (TFA). The Department of Social Services may provide you with a letter that will automatically qualify your child for free meals. This letter must be brought to school, and can be substituted for completion of this application.

- **Households getting SNAP or TFA:** You only have to include your child's name, case number and an adult household member must sign the application.
- **Households receiving medical benefits only:** You have to include the names of all household members, the amount of income each person received last month and where the income came from. An adult household member must sign the application and include his or her social security number.
- **Other households:** If you DO NOT have a case number, you have to include the names of all household members, the amount of income each person received last month and where the income came from. An adult household member must sign the application and include his or her social security number.
- **Household with children enrolled in the Head Start/Even Start Program** should contact the school for assistance in receiving benefits.
- **Households with a foster child:** You must include the child's name, the amount of personal use income the child received last month and an adult must sign the application. **Note:** *Subsidized adoptions and subsidized guardianships require the calculation of all household income plus the adoption/guardianship subsidy.*

REDUCED PRICE INCOME CHART FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010				
Number in Family	Annual Gross Income	Monthly Gross Income	Every Two Weeks Gross Income	Weekly Gross Income
1	20,036	1,670	771	386
2	26,955	2,247	1,037	519
3	33,874	2,823	1,303	652
4	40,793	3,400	1,569	785
5	47,712	3,976	1,836	918
6	54,631	4,553	2,102	1,051
7	61,550	5,130	2,368	1,184
8	68,469	5,706	2,634	1,317
Each Add'l Family Member	+ 6,919	+ 577	+ 267	+ 134

Will the application be verified? Your eligibility may be checked at anytime during the school year. School officials may ask you to send papers that show that your child should get free or reduced price school meals.

Can I appeal the school's decision? You can talk to school officials if you do not agree with the school's decision on your application or the results of verification. You also may ask for a fair hearing by calling or writing: Thomas Hennick, Chair, Board of Education, Regional School District #13, P.O. Box 190, Durham, CT 06422, Tel.: 860-349-7200.

Can homeless and runaway children get free meals? If you have not been informed that they will get free meals, please call the school or the school homeless liaison at: 860-349-7208 to see if your child(ren) qualify.

If 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 an application.

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.

We are in the military; do we include our housing allowance as income? If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do **not** include your housing allowance as income. All other allowances must be included in your gross income.

Will information on my application be kept confidential? We will use the information on your application to decide if your child should get free or reduced price meals. We may inform officials connected with Title I and the National Assessment of Educational Progress whether your child is eligible for free or reduced price school meals. They will use this information for funding and/or evaluation purposes. Information may also be disclosed if you want the application to be used to get other benefits.

Can I apply for free and reduced price meals later? You may apply for free and reduced price meals anytime during the school year. If you are not eligible now but have a change, such as a decrease in household income, an increase in household size, become unemployed or receive SNAP benefits or TFA, then you can choose to complete an application.

If my child is eligible for free meals, will my child and family also be eligible for SNAP benefits? Your child and family *may* be eligible for SNAP benefits if your child is determined to be eligible for free meals. For information regarding the SNAP and to contact the Department of Social Services office in your town, contact United Way's free referral number **2-1-1** (free call, statewide).

We will let you know if you are approved or denied.

Sincerely,

Ronald Melnik, Business Manager

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