

The Board of Education believes that the purpose of the food service program is to enhance the nutritional well being of students enrolled in the Richmond School District. To that extent, employees understand that good nutrition is vital in insuring that the District's student body reaches their full physical, emotional, and intellectual potential.

The District participates in the Special Milk Program. As such, all students regardless of proof of financial need receive free milk with their lunch. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch receive the same lunch offerings available to all students.

Regarding any individual child's or any household's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals:

1. A household may submit an application for free and reduced-price benefits (or reapply) at any time during the school year, starting on July 1.
2. Applications are available at the school's main office. Applications can also be found on the District's website. Applications are also periodically distributed directly to school families.
3. Only a single application is needed for all children in the household who are attending schools in the District.
4. Income-based eligibility for free or reduced-price meals varies based on the size of the household (i.e., based on the number of people in the household).
5. Some children are eligible for free or reduced-price benefits based on what is known as "categorical eligibility," which includes individual students who qualify as a child in foster care, a homeless child, a migrant child, a runaway child, or a Head Start program enrollee. Children in households receiving Wisconsin Works (W-2) cash assistance, FoodShare/SNAP benefits, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) benefits are also categorically eligible.
  - a. Categorical eligibility may be established through the application process or through the direct certification process. If a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult believes that any child's eligibility should have been established through direct certification but the household has not received notification of eligibility, he/she should contact the Bookkeeper.
  - b. When an application is submitted on the basis of categorical eligibility, it is not necessary to include household income information on the application unless the household includes additional children to whom categorical eligibility does not apply.
  - c. Households that include children who may be categorically eligible as a child in foster care, a homeless child, a migrant child, a runaway child, or a Head Start program enrollee should indicate the specific status of each such child on the application. These households are also encouraged to contact the District for assistance with the application process and in receiving benefits.
  - d. Although any child in foster care is categorically eligible for free meals, a foster care family that chooses to apply for free or reduced-price benefits may include a child who is in foster care

as an additional member of the foster family household, and doing so may help other children in the household qualify for benefits (because of the larger household size). If the foster care child is included as a member of the household, any income attributable to the child must also be included on the application. The eligibility determination for the foster family household will not affect the individual eligibility of the child who is in foster care.

6. All school-aged children in income-eligible households can receive free or reduced-price benefits regardless of the immigration status of any household members.
7. The District has legal obligations to make efforts to communicate with parents, guardians, and students in a language that they can understand. The application for free and reduced price benefits is available in multiple languages, and other language assistance for persons with limited English proficiency is also available.
8. Households that have applied and initially qualified for free and reduced-price benefits may later be required to participate in a verification process regarding the information that was provided on an application. Failure to respond on a timely basis to a request for verification results in the loss of free or reduced-price benefits for the applicable children. Verification can occur at any time during the school year.
9. If the District makes a determination of ineligibility for free or reduced-price benefits, or if the District determines that either free or reduced-price benefits must be discontinued following a verification of eligibility, the affected household may appeal the decision by requesting a formal hearing using the District's fair hearing procedures. The household may also request and participate in an informal conference to further discuss the situation prior to any formal hearing.

### **Initial Eligibility and Carryover and Transfer Eligibility**

For any child whose eligibility for benefits is not established through direct certification, the District must make an eligibility determination based on an application. Once the District makes a determination of eligibility based on an application, the effective date of the child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals is the date of the District's eligibility determination/approval.

If the District determines that any child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the determination is generally valid within the District for the entire remainder of the current school year, even if the household's circumstances change after the initial application and determination of eligibility. At the start of the subsequent school year, such children retain their previous year's eligibility status for 30 operating days or until a new determination is made, whichever comes first.

When a student transfers into the District from a school outside the District and there is documentation that the non-district school determined that the student was federally-eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the District accepts a previous school's valid eligibility determination for the maximum period of time required or permitted under applicable federal regulations and state procedures. However, in order to avoid the expiration of such carryover/transfer eligibility, households with students who are transferring into the District should pursue a District determination of eligibility (e.g., by submitting a completed application) as soon as possible.

## Legal References:

### Wisconsin Statutes

<a href="#">Section 115.34</a>	[school lunch program, generally]
<a href="#">Section 115.341</a>	[school breakfast program, generally]
<a href="#">Section 115.343</a>	[Wisconsin school day milk program, generally]
<a href="#">Section 115.347</a>	[direct certification of eligibility for school nutrition programs]

### Federal Law

<a href="#">42 U.S.C. §1758(b)(2)(A)</a>	[school district duty to publicly announce the income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced-price meals]
<a href="#">42 U.S.C. §1758(b)(6)</a>	[confidentiality of federal meal program application information and eligibility status; disclosure limitations]
<a href="#">7 C.F.R. §210.12</a>	[district duty to involve families in the school meal programs and to inform families about the availability of federal food programs]
<a href="#">7 C.F.R. Part 245</a>	[determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals and free milk in schools; multiple regulatory sections within this part are relevant]

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement and Complaint Information**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
  - (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
  - (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).
- This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Richmond School District shall not discriminate in school-sponsored food service programs on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental

status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability or handicap. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established procedures:

Legal References:	Sections	115.34 Wisconsin State Statutes 118.13 120. 10(16) 120.13(6)&(10) PI 0.03 Wisconsin Administrative Code PL 91-248 PL 94-105
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Cross Reference:	Student Discrimination Complaint Procedures Policy No. 411 Enrollment/Registration Packet
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Approved:	7/13/2009
Reviewed:	12/11/2017