

[Insert School District Letterhead]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school provides healthy meals each day. Breakfast costs [\$]; lunch costs [\$].

Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals. Reduced price is [\$] for lunch. “Reduced-price” breakfasts are served at no charge. To apply for free or reduced-price school meals, complete the enclosed Application for Educational Benefits following the enclosed instructions. This also helps our school qualify for additional education funds and discounts.

Return your completed Application for Educational Benefits to:

- 1. Who can get free or reduced price meals?** Children in households participating in Food Stamps, Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) and most foster children can get free meals without reporting household income. Also, children can get free or reduced-price meals if household income is within the income shown for your household size on the chart on the next page. An Application for Educational Benefits cannot be approved if any required information is missing.
- 2. I get WIC. Can my children get free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an Application for Educational Benefits.
- 3. Should I fill out an application if I got a letter this school year saying my children were directly certified for free meals based on data from the MN Department of Human Services?** Do not fill out an Application for Educational Benefits if all of your children have been directly certified for free school meals. If only some of your children were directly certified, you can fill out an Application for Educational Benefits to apply for your children who were not directly certified.
- 4. Will the information I give be checked?** Yes, we may ask you to send written proof.
- 5. If I don’t qualify now, may I apply later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your income goes down, household size goes up, or if you start getting Food Stamps, MFIP, or FDPIR benefits.
- 6. 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.
- 7. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?** Yes. You or your children do not have to be U.S. citizens for your children to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
- 8. Who should I include as members of my household?** You must include yourself and all other people living in the household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends). Include a household member who is temporarily away such as a college student.
- 9. What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally get. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get it only sometimes.
- 10. How will the information I provide be kept?** Information you provide on the form, and your child’s approval for school meal benefits, will be protected as private data.
- 11. Do I need to notify school officials if my income increases or my household size decreases after I have qualified for free or reduced price meals?** No. Approval for free or reduced price meals is good for the school year.

If you have other questions or need help, call **[phone number]**.

Sincerely,
[signature]

**Instructions for Completing
APPLICATION for EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS**

If your household participates in FOOD STAMPS, MFIP, or FDPIR, follow these instructions:

- Part 1:** Check the box if this is the first time a school meal application is being completed for any child.
Part 2: Check the box labeled "All children in the household." List each child's name, date of birth, grade, school, and case number. Medical Assistance case numbers do *not* qualify.
Part 3: Skip this part.
Part 4: If your children are approved for meal benefits, this information may be shared with Minnesota health insurance programs to identify eligible children. Leave the boxes blank to allow sharing of information.
Part 5: An adult household member must sign the form. A Social Security number is not necessary.

If you are applying for a FOSTER CHILD, follow these instructions:

- Use a separate application for each foster child.**
Part 1: Check the box if this is the first time a school meal application is completed for this child.
Part 2: Check the box labeled "One foster child." List the foster child's name, date of birth, grade, and school. In the last column "SSI or other regular income to child," list any income that is designated for the child's personal use or write "None" if the child has no personal use income.
Part 3: Skip this part.
Part 4: If your child is approved for meal benefits, this information may be shared with Minnesota health insurance programs to identify eligible children. Leave the boxes blank to allow sharing of information.
Part 5: An adult household member must sign the form. A Social Security number is not necessary.

ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS, including WIC households, follow these instructions:

Complete an Application for Educational Benefits if your household income is less than or equal to the amount shown for your household size in this chart. These amounts are effective July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

Total Household Income - Maximum

Household Size	\$ Per Year	\$ Per Month	\$ Twice Per Month	\$ Per 2 Weeks	\$ Per Week
1	19,240	1,604	802	740	370
2	25,900	2,159	1,080	997	499
3	32,560	2,714	1,357	1,253	627
4	39,220	3,269	1,635	1,509	755
5	45,880	3,824	1,912	1,765	883
6	52,540	4,379	2,190	2,021	1,011
7	59,200	4,934	2,467	2,277	1,139
8	65,860	5,489	2,745	2,534	1,267
For each additional household member add:	6,660	555	278	257	129

- Part 1:** Check the box if this is the first time a school meal application is being completed for any child.
Part 2: Check the box labeled "All children in the household." List each child's name, date of birth, grade and school. If a child receives regular income, such as SSI payments or wages from a job, list the amount and how often it is received in the last column. Do not list occasional earnings like babysitting.
Part 3: Report all incomes for all adult household members.
Names: List the first and last name of each adult living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends), including yourself. Include a household member temporarily away from home such as a college student. Attach another page if necessary.
No Income: Check this box if a person has no income.
Gross Monthly Wages and Salaries: Next to each adult's name list the **gross income** earned from work before taxes and other deductions, *not* take-home pay. Next to each amount, write in how often the income is received (weekly, every two weeks, twice per month, monthly).
All Other Incomes: List all other amounts, in addition to wages and salaries, received on a regular basis from any source. For self-employment, list *net* income (after business expenses) here.
Part 4: If your children are approved for meal benefits, this information may be shared with Minnesota health insurance programs to identify eligible children. Leave the boxes blank to allow sharing of information.
Part 5: An adult household member must sign the form and provide their Social Security number. If the person signing the form does not have a Social Security number, they may indicate this by checking the box.

- Check here if this is the first school meal application for any child listed below.
- I have listed below **All children in the household** except foster children, from birth through high school. Attach an additional page if necessary. (check one): **One foster child** in my care (who is the legal responsibility of a social services agency or court). Complete a separate application for each foster child. Do not combine foster children and other children on this form. The last column must show any foster care funds that are specifically for the child's personal use. If no foster care funds have been designated for foster child's personal use, write in "none" in the last column.

Names of All Children In Household except Foster Children Or Name of One Foster Child First Name Last Name		Date of Birth Month/Day/Year	Grade (PreK - 12 th)	School	If applicable Case Number (MFIP, Food Stamps, or FDPIR Only)	If applicable SSI or Other Regular Income to Child
1		/ /				\$ _____ per _____
2		/ /				\$ _____ per _____
3		/ /				\$ _____ per _____
4		/ /				\$ _____ per _____
5		/ /				\$ _____ per _____

- List *all adults* in the household, *all incomes*, and *how often* each income is received. Attach an additional page if necessary. Skip Section 3 below only if all children applying for school meal benefits in Section 2 have case numbers, or if this application is for a foster child. The Instructions page shows the maximum income to qualify for school meal benefits.

Names of All Adults in Household (all household members not listed in Section 1) First Name Last Name		Check this column if person has NO INCOME ✓	Incomes Write in each income <i>and</i> how often it is received: weekly, bi-weekly (every 2 weeks), twice per month, monthly, or yearly . If income fluctuates, write in the amount normally received.				
			Wages and Salaries from all jobs - before deductions -	Pension, SSI, Retirement, Social Security	Public Assistance, Child Support, Alimony	Unemployment, Worker's Comp, Strike Benefits	Any Other Income, including <i>net</i> Farm/ Self-Employment
1			\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____
2			\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____
3			\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____
4			\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____	\$ _____ per _____

- If your children are approved for school meal benefits, this information may be shared with MinnesotaCare and General Assistance Medical Care programs to identify children eligible for Minnesota health insurance programs. See back page for more information. Leave the boxes blank to allow sharing of information. Do not share my information with the MinnesotaCare health insurance program Do not share my information with the General Assistance Medical Care program
- I certify that the information provided on this application is true and correct. Because federal and state funds may be paid on the basis of this information, I understand that school and state officials may verify the information, and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable laws.**

Signature of Adult Household Member (required) _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
 Social Security number (required if Part 3 is completed): _____ - _____ - _____ OR I don't have a Social Security number
 Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____ Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Total Household Size: _____ Total Household Income: _____
 Or Household Receives: MFIP / Food Stamps / FDPIR
 Approved: Free _____ Reduced-Price _____ Temporary until _____, _____, _____
 Denied: Incomplete _____ Income Too High _____ Other: _____
 Signature of Determining Official: _____ Date: _____
 Withdrawn: _____
 Change Status To: _____ Reason: _____

Office Use Only

Date Verification Sent: _____ Response Due: _____ 2nd Notice Sent: _____
 Result: No Change _____ Free to Reduced-Price _____ Free to Paid _____ Reduced-Price to Free _____ Reduced-Price to Paid _____
 Reason for Change: Income _____ Household Size _____ Change in Benefits _____ Refused Cooperation _____ Other: _____
 Date 'Notice of Change' Sent: _____
 Signature of Verifying Official: _____ Date: _____

Office Use Only

Social Security Number / Complete Application

The National School Lunch Act requires that unless an MFIP, Food Stamp or FDPIR assistance number is supplied for your child or you are applying for a foster child, the household member signing the application must provide their Social Security number or indicate that they do not have a Social Security number. Provision of a Social Security number is not mandatory, but if a Social Security number is not given, or an indication is not made that the signer does not have such a number, the application cannot be approved.

To be complete, an application based on public assistance must include children's names, assistance numbers, and signature of an adult household member. A complete application based on household income must include the names of all household members, the amounts of income received by all adult household members, the signature of an adult household member, and the Social Security number of the household member completing the application. A complete application for a foster child must include the child's name, the amount of any income received for the child's personal use, and the signature of an adult household member.

Verification

The school and the MN Department of Education may use the information provided on this form in carrying out efforts to verify the correctness of household size and income and public assistance information stated on the application. These verification efforts may be carried out through program reviews, audits, and investigations and may include contacting state agencies such as the MN Departments of Economic Security, Human Services, or Revenue to verify income or current approval for public assistance. These efforts may result in a loss or reduction of benefits, administrative claims or legal actions if incorrect information is reported.

Privacy of Information That You Provide on This Form

Information that you provide on this form is private data. The information is used to determine and verify whether children in your household qualify for free or reduced-price school meals and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We may share your 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. The information you provide on this application is not released for any other purpose unless a parent or guardian requests the release in writing.

Privacy of Your Child's Eligibility Status

Your child's eligibility status for school meals (qualified for "free," "reduced-price," or "paid" meals) is private data used by the school to provide the correct school meal benefit to your child. At public school districts, each student's eligibility status is recorded on a statewide computer system used to report student data to the MN Department of Education as required by state law. The MN Department of Education uses this information to (1) administer state and federal programs, (2) calculate compensatory revenue for public schools, and (3) judge the quality of the state's educational program.

Federal law allows a school to release a child's meal eligibility status to officials of the following types of programs without household consent: (1) federal education program, (2) state health or education program administered by the school or a state agency, and (3) federal, state, or local nutrition program that has participation requirements similar to the National School Lunch Program. School officials may send information about other programs or benefits that may be of interest to households that have qualified for free or reduced-price school meals. School meal eligibility information is also used for statistical reports, without individual identification. A child's eligibility status will not be released for any other purpose unless a parent or guardian requests the release in writing.

Sharing Information with MinnesotaCare and General Assistance Medical Care Programs

Children who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals may be eligible for Minnesota health insurance programs. Your child's eligibility status for school meals (qualified for free or reduced-price meals) may be shared with the MinnesotaCare and General Assistance Medical Care programs unless you tell us not to. You are not required to share information for this purpose and your decision will not affect approval for school meal benefits.

Civil Rights Survey (voluntary)

1. Ethnicity (check one):

- Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino

2. Race (check one or more):

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
 Asian
 Black or African American
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 White

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination 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.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.