

## **Newburyport Public Schools**

### **Public Media Release for Free & Reduced School Meals**

Every child needs a healthy, filling meal to learn. The Newburyport Public Schools offer nutritious meals to children each school day, often at a free or reduced price for those who need it. Newburyport schools participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program (NSLBP), a federally funded program that helps children receive free or reduced meals

**FAMILY APPLICATIONS:** Families could apply for benefits any time during the school year. Family application forms are also available at the Newburyport Public Schools website and at all schools. Directions are included on the application. Only one application is required per family. To apply for free or reduced price meals, households should fill out only one application for all children in their household and return it to the Principal's Office or to the cafeteria. Incomplete applications will be denied and a letter will be sent to the mailing address provided on the application. Parent/guardian is responsible for all charges made on the account until the application has been approved, regardless of new status. The information provided on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by school officials. Once approved, meal benefits are good for an entire school year and for up to 30 operating days into the new school year as eligibility from the previous school year will continue with the program. When the carry-over period ends, unless the household is notified that their children are directly certified or the household submits an application that is approved, the children must pay full price for school meals.

Households that receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program): Formerly the food stamp program or TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) will receive a letter automatically approving individual children for free breakfast/lunch through the Direct Certification Program. If a household that receives SNAP or TANF does not receive an automatic approval notice, the household should contact the Newburyport Public Schools. For any child not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the Newburyport Public Schools to have free meal benefits extended to that child(ren) or should submit an income application and return it to Principal's office at their child's school. If you do not want your child(ren) to have free meals please notify the Newburyport Public Schools in writing of your request.

When known to the school district, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is Other Source Categorically Eligible because the child is categorized as Homeless, migrant, or runaway as defined by law.

A foster child is categorically eligible for free meals and may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other children. By including children in foster care as household members, it may help other children in the household qualify for meal benefits.

Categorical eligibility for free meals is extended to all children in a household when the application lists an Assistance Program's case number for any household member.

Households with any member who is currently certified to receive Assistance Program benefits may submit an application for these children with the abbreviated information as indicated on the application and instructions. Households with children who are categorically eligible under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs should contact the school for assistance in receiving benefits and must mark the relevant box on the application.

Children of parents or guardians who become unemployed any time during the school year may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Families could apply for benefits any time during the school year.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) participants may be eligible for free or reduced price meals.

A household may appeal the decision of the School District with respect to the application using the hearing procedure described in the free and reduced price policy statement.

Student meal accounts are *private and confidential* with personal ID numbers that prevent overt identification.

**Does my family qualify?**

More families qualify than you may think. To find out if your family qualifies for the free or reduced priced meals, please reference the income chart below or visit <http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/> and click on the Free & Reduced link, under Resources for Parents, for an application. Paper copies are available in the main office of any Newburyport Public School.

If your family income is at or below the proceeding chart, you may qualify for free or reduced priced meals.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2015-2016			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$21,775	\$1,815	\$ 419
2	\$29,471	\$2,456	\$ 567
3	\$37,167	\$3,098	\$ 715
4	\$44,863	\$3,739	\$ 863
5	\$52,559	\$4,380	\$1,011
6	\$60,255	\$5,022	\$1,159
7	\$67,951	\$5,663	\$1,307
8	\$75,647	\$6,304	\$1,455
Each additional person:	+\$7,696	\$ +642	\$ +148

Free or reduced meals applications require only the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member signing the application.

If you have trouble completing your school meal application or have additional questions, please feel free to contact the Food Services Department @ 978-465-4460.

The completed family application should be sent to the building principal at the school your youngest child attends.

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