



BUCKEYE

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #33

A community passionate about student success

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Buckeye Elementary School District offers healthy meals every school day at NO COST to the students, due to the school's participation in the Provision 2 program of the National School Lunch/School Breakfast Programs.

While the meals are provided at no cost, **the school must determine which students qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals.** This packet includes an application for free or reduced-price meal benefits, as well as a set of detailed instructions. Please fill the application and turn into the school administration. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. WHO QUALIFIES FOR FREE MEALS?

- All children in households receiving benefits from **SNAP, FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations)** or **TANF**, can get free meals regardless of your income.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in their school's Head Start Program are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children can qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household's gross income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

Federal Eligibility Income Chart for School Year 2020-2021			
Household Size	Yearly Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income
1	\$23,606	\$1,968	\$454
2	\$31,894	\$2,658	\$614
3	\$40,182	\$3,349	\$773
4	\$48,470	\$4,040	\$933
5	\$56,758	\$4,730	\$1,092
6	\$65,046	\$5,421	\$1,251
7	\$73,334	\$6,112	\$1,411
8	\$81,622	\$6,802	\$1,570
Each additional person:	+\$8,288	+\$691	+\$160

- HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY?**
Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call Buckeye Elementary School District at 623.925.3400
- DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. *Use one Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: the Child Nutrition Department.

3. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN QUALIFIED FOR FREE MEALS? No, but please read the letter you got carefully. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact 623.925.3400 immediately.

4. CAN I APPLY ONLINE? Absolutely!

Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Visit EZMealApp.com to begin.

OR to learn more about the online application process please visit our website at BESD33.ORG

5. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE? Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year through 09/09/2021. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child has already qualified for the new school year.

6. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Please fill out an application.

7. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.

8. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.

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:

Buckeye Elementary School District
Child Nutrition Director

Jason Woods
623.925.3421
jwoods@besd33.org

10. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

11. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.

12. WHAT IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE NO INCOME TO REPORT? Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

13. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of

the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.

14. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application. Contact the Child Nutrition Department at 623.925.3400 to receive a second application.
15. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT QUALIFY FOR? To find out how to apply for **SNAP** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-352-8401.

If you have other questions or need help, call the Child Nutrition Department at 623.925.3400.

Sincerely,

Jason Woods
Child Nutrition Director

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information requested in order to verify your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. If you do not provide the information or provide incomplete information, your children may no longer receive free or reduced-price meals. 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, 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.

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