

HOPE Online Learning Academy Co-Op

PUBLIC RELEASE 2015-2016 School Year

HOPE Online Learning Academy Co-Op today announced its policy for determining eligibility of children who may receive free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. HOPE Online offers a Universal Free Lunch and Breakfast but applications still need to be processed to determine eligibility. Local school officials will use the following household size and income criteria for determining eligibility.

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>FREE MEALS</u> <u>Yearly</u>	<u>REDUCED PRICE MEALS</u> <u>Yearly</u>
1	\$15,301	\$21,775
2	\$20,709	\$29,471
3	\$26,117	\$37,167
4	\$31,525	\$44,863
5	\$36,933	\$52,559
6	\$42,341	\$60,255
7	\$47,749	\$67,951
8	\$53,157	\$75,647
For each additional family member add:	\$5,408	\$7,696

Children from families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

Applications for Free and Reduced Price School Meals are being provided to all homes with a letter to households. Only one application is required for all children in the household. Additional copies are available in each school. The information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility and verifying data.

Applications from families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) benefits need only to list the children's names, name of the person receiving the program benefits, respective case number, and the signature of an adult household member. Eligibility for free meals is extended to all children in the household when the application lists a case number for any household member.

All other households that would qualify based upon income must show the names of all household members related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends), the amount of gross income each person receives, the frequency and source of pay, the signature of an adult household member, and the last four digits of that adult's social security number—or check the box if the adult does not have a social security number. The information on the application may be verified by the school or other program officials at any time during the school year.

Households with children who are eligible under the Head Start, homeless, migrant, or runaway programs should contact the school for assistance in receiving benefits. To complete an application, they must mark the relevant box to indicate their appropriate eligibility.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income. If a family has just foster children in the home and wishes to apply for meals, they should complete the application using the instructions for households with foster children only. If a family has foster and non-foster children living with them and wishes to apply for meals, they should complete the application using the instructions for households that have foster and non-foster children residing in the home. Including foster children as household members may help other children in the household qualify for meal benefits.

An application cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions.

When known to the school district, households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free meals if they are members of households receiving assistance from SNAP or FDPIR. If the household receives such a notice, no application is required for free meal benefits. If any children in the household were not listed on the eligibility notice or not listed on the application, the household should contact the district to have benefits extended to that child(ren).

When known to the school district, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is categorized as homeless, migrant, or runaway or is enrolled in an eligible Head Start program. For any child not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district about any child also eligible under one of these programs or should submit an application for other children.

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the district if they choose to decline meal benefits.

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

Under the provision of the Policy, the Nutrition Coordinator will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision, a request may be made to discuss it with the determining official. A formal appeal may be made either orally or in writing to Michael Cooke for a hearing to appeal the decision. The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

Each school has a copy of the complete policy which may be reviewed by any interested party.

Applications may be submitted any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now but have a decrease in income, become unemployed, have an increase in family size, or become eligible for SNAP or FDPIR benefits or become categorically eligible, you may fill out an application at that time.

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