

To: DCPS Families
 From: Robert M. Jaber, Deputy Chief, Food and Nutrition Services
 Date: July 21, 2026
 Re: Child Nutrition Programs, Meal Charge Policy, and Dietary Accommodations

USDA Child Nutrition Programs School Year 2026-2027

DC Public Schools (DCPS) is proud to offer nutritious meals to support student learning and success. DCPS participates in the National School Lunch Program and adheres to guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the DC Healthy Schools Act. The Division of Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) operates the National School Breakfast Program, the National School Lunch Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Summer Food Service Program.

DCPS FNS will charge for meals at non-Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools during the school year 2026-2027. Breakfast remains at no cost to students at all DCPS schools, and after-school meals (provided at select schools) are universally free. Contact your school administrator to learn about meal programs specific to your school.

Meal Prices		
	Paid Meal Price Status	Free/Reduced/CEP Meal Price Status
Breakfast	Free	Free
Lunch, 1 st time through the line*	\$3.00	Free
Milk**	\$0.50	\$0.50
*Each student is eligible for one lunch only.		
**Must have money on LINQ Connect meal account to purchase.		

What is a Meal? (Grades K-12)	
Breakfast	Lunch
Breakfast includes a combination of the following components: - Whole grains and/or a meat or meat alternate - Fruit and/or vegetable - Low-fat, Skim, or Lactose Free milk To qualify as a reimbursable meal, students must select at least three (3) components , and one must be a fruit or vegetable .	Lunch includes: - Whole grains - Fruits (may select >1 serving) - Vegetables (may select >1 serving) - Meat or meat alternate - Low-fat, Skim, or Lactose Free milk Students must choose at least three (3) components , with one being a fruit or vegetable , to meet USDA meal pattern requirements.
These meal patterns help ensure students receive the nutrients they need to stay focused and energized throughout the day. If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact us.	

Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARM) Application and Family Economic Survey Form

Your student may qualify for free lunch in one of the following ways:

- If your student attends one of the 97 schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision Program (CEP); to see this list of schools, please see Appendix B of this document, visit the web page below, or contact your



school. <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/community-eligibility-provision-cep-schools>.

- b. At non-CEP schools, DCPS students may qualify for free meals by:
 - a. Direct Certification: Students are part of households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
 - b. Categorically Eligible: Students who meet the definition of a Foster child, Homeless child, Migrant child, Head Start child, or Runaway child. Students/families should contact their school counselor or the [DCPS Homeless Liaison](#).
 - c. A [Free and Reduced-Priced Meal \(FARM\) application](#) is submitted and approved based on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. See Appendix A for a list of DC Public Schools that require a FARM application.

If your child does not attend a CEP school and is not directly certified, please complete the 2026-2027 Free and Reduced-Price Meal (FARM) application online at dcps.dc.gov/FARM to see if they are eligible for free lunch.

NOTE: A new form must be completed each school year. The form for the following school year becomes available July 1st of each year. Automated communications are used to remind families to complete FARM applications to ensure all students who qualify for free meals are made aware of the application. All school-aged children in income-eligible households can receive school meal benefits regardless of immigration status. The Public Charge rule does not apply to FARM benefits.

Previous FARM Status Students

The 30-school day grace period for completing the FARM application for students who qualified for FARM or attended a CEP school last year ends on:

1. Grades K-12: October 5, 2026
2. Grades PK3-PK4: October 8, 2026

New FARM Applicants *(New to DCPS or no prior SY25-26 FARM application on file)*

New applicants attending non-CEP schools are strongly encouraged to have their applications submitted before August 24th, 2026, to take advantage of their meal benefits. More information about these benefits can be found at <https://dcps.dc.gov/farm>.

Local Meal Charge Policy

For complete details on our meal charge policy, visit: <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/meal-prices-and-payment>.

Meal Payments

The balance of student meal accounts that have carried over from the 2025-2026 school year will be sent in a separate letter.

Submit payment for lunch meals in one of the following ways:

1. By loading funds with a credit/debit card on your student's online meal account (including relevant processing fee per transaction) or,
2. By sending a check or money order (**student ID# must be included**) made payable to the **DC Treasurer** to the following address:

DCPS Food and Nutrition Services
Attn: Nadine James, Meal Accounts
1200 First Street NE, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Students will never be refused their initial lunch meal or served an alternate meal selection if there are no funds in the student's account. The meal will automatically be charged to the student's account and will create a negative meal balance. Students with a negative meal balance are not identified in any way during meal service and will receive the same meal choices.

Negative Meal Balance

As a courtesy reminder, if a student's meal account goes into debt, households will get a weekly automatic email. Automated communications will continue until the negative meal balance is paid. The above payment methods (online and check/money order) can be used to pay off negative meal balances. As your student continues to eat lunch and no payment is made, negative meal balances will increase. Any unpaid meal balances will roll over into the next school year. Any payments made will first go to pay off the negative meal balance.

Please contact FNS to report inaccurate charges or suspicious account activity prior to the end of the school year to allow time for investigations. Balance adjustments from a previous school year's transactions are no longer permitted.

Dietary Accommodation Forms

If your student needs a special diet or meal plan at school because of a food allergy, medical condition, or religious or personal belief, please let us know. Please complete a dietary accommodation form at dcps.dc.gov/page/dietary-accommodations and submit the completed form to dietary.forms@k12.dc.gov or to your school's cafeteria manager. Please allow time for the processing and development of menus. A new form must be submitted if any changes to your child's diet occur but otherwise no longer needs to be submitted each school year. FNS reserves the right to decline a request that is beyond reasonable accommodation.

If you have any questions, please contact Food & Nutrition Services by phone at 202-299-2159 or email food.dcps@k12.dc.gov. Visit our webpage at dcps.dc.gov/food.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Jaber
Deputy Chief
Food & Nutrition Services
Office of Operations
District of Columbia Public Schools

Appendix A: DCPS Paid (Non-CEP) Schools for School Year 2026-2027

If your child(ren) attends a DCPS school listed below, please complete [Free and Reduced Meal \(FARM\) application](#) in order to apply for free lunch for your child(ren) if they are not directly certified.

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Brent Elementary School | 11. Mann Elementary School |
| 2. Deal Middle School | 12. Maury Elementary School |
| 3. Eaton Elementary School | 13. Murch Elementary School |
| 4. Hardy Middle School | 14. Oyster-Adams – Adams Campus |
| 5. Hearst Elementary School | 15. Oyster-Adams – Oyster Campus |
| 6. Hyde-Addison Elementary School | 16. Peabody Elementary School |
| 7. Jackson-Reed High School | 17. Ross Elementary School |
| 8. Janney Elementary School | 18. Shepherd Elementary School |
| 9. Key Elementary School | 19. Stoddert Elementary School |
| 10. Lafayette Elementary School | 20. School Within a School – Goding |
| | 21. School Without Walls High School |

Appendix B: DCPS Community Eligibility Provision Schools (CEP) for School Year 2026-2027

If your child(ren) attend one of these schools, you **do not need** to complete a Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) application but may do so to qualify for other benefits. Your child(ren) will automatically receive free meals at their DCPS school.

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| 1. Aiton Elementary School | 44. John Lewis Elementary School |
| 2. Amidon Bowen Elementary School | 45. John Thompson Jr. High School (formerly MacArthur High School) |
| 3. Anacostia High School | 46. Johnson John Hayden Middle School |
| 4. Ballou High School | 47. Kelly Miller Middle School |
| 5. Ballou STAY | 48. Ketcham Elementary School |
| 6. Bancroft Elementary School | 49. Kimball Elementary School |
| 7. Bard High School Early College DC | 50. Kramer Middle School |
| 8. Barnard Elementary School | 51. Langdon Elementary School |
| 9. Beers Elementary School | 52. Langley Elementary School |
| 10. Benjamin Banneker High School | 53. LaSalle-Backus Education Campus |
| 11. Boone Elementary School | 54. Leckie Elementary School |
| 12. Brightwood Elementary School | 55. Ludlow-Taylor Elementary School |
| 13. Brookland Middle School | 56. Luke Moore Alternative High School |
| 14. Browne Education Campus | 57. MacFarland Middle School |
| 15. Bruce-Monroe Elementary School at Park View | 58. M.L. King Elementary School |
| 16. Bunker Hill Elementary School | 59. Malcolm X Elementary School |
| 17. Burroughs Elementary School | 60. Marie Reed Elementary School |
| 18. Burrville Elementary School | 61. McKinley Middle School |
| 19. C.W. Harris Elementary School | 62. McKinley Technology High School |
| 20. Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan | 63. Military Road Early Learning Center |
| 21. Cardozo Education Campus | 64. Miner Elementary School |
| 22. Chisholm (formerly Tyler) Elementary School | 65. Moten Elementary School |
| 23. Cleveland Elementary School | 66. Nalle Elementary School |
| 24. Columbia Heights Education Campus | 67. Noyes Elementary School |
| 25. Coolidge High School | 68. Patterson Elementary School |
| 26. Dorothy I. Height Elementary School | 69. Payne Elementary School |
| 27. Drew Elementary School | 70. Phelps ACE High School |
| 28. Duke Ellington School of the Arts | 71. Plummer Elementary School |
| 29. Dunbar High School | 72. Powell Elementary School |
| 30. Eastern High School | 73. Randle Highlands Elementary School |
| 31. Eliot Hine Middle School | 74. Raymond Elementary School |
| 32. Excel Academy Public School | 75. River Terrace Education Campus |
| 33. Garfield Elementary School | 76. Ron Brown College Preparatory High School |
| 34. Garnet-Patterson (formerly Roosevelt) STAY | 77. Roosevelt High School |
| 35. Garrison Elementary School | 78. Savoy Elementary School |
| 36. H.D. Cooke Elementary School | 79. Seaton Elementary School |
| 37. Hart Middle School | 80. Simon Elementary School |
| 38. Hendley Elementary School | 81. Smothers Elementary School |
| 39. Houston Elementary School | 82. Sousa Middle School |
| 40. Ida B. Wells Middle School | 83. Stanton Elementary School |
| 41. J.O. Wilson Elementary School | 84. Stevens Early Learning Center |
| 42. Jefferson Middle School Academy | 85. Stuart-Hobson Middle School |
| 43. John Francis Education Campus (formerly School Without Walls at Francis Stevens) | |



86. Takoma Education Campus
87. Thomas Elementary School
88. Thomson Elementary School
89. Truesdell Elementary School
90. Tubman Elementary School
91. Turner Elementary School
92. Van Ness Elementary School
93. Walker-Jones Education Campus
94. Watkins Elementary School
95. Wheatley Education Campus
96. Whittier Elementary School
97. HD Woodson High School



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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, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) 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, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

(1) mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

(2) fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email:

program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. To see the translated version of this letter, please visit: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/meal-prices-and-payment>.