



To: DCPS Families  
From: Robert M. Jaber, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, FNS  
Date: July 1, 2024  
Re: Child Nutrition Programs, Meal Charge Policy, and Dietary Accommodations

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## USDA Child Nutrition Programs

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. Our schools participate in 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 Food & Nutrition Services will continue charging for meals at non-Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools during school year 2024-2025. Breakfast remains at no cost to students at all DCPS schools, and afterschool meals (provided at select schools) are universally free. Contact your school administrator to learn about meal programs specific to your school.

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

- a. If your student attends one of the 96 schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision Program (CEP); to see this list of schools, please see page 4 of this document, visit the below web page, 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:
    - i. Students are in 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).
    - ii. Students are foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or the court, or are homeless, migrant, categorically eligible, or runaway.
  - b. A [Free and Reduced-Priced Meal \(FARM\) application](#) is submitted and approved based on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. See page 4 for 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 2024 - 2025 Free and Reduced-Price Meal (FARM) application online at [dcps.dc.gov/FARM](https://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 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Automated communications are used to remind families to complete FARM applications to ensure all students qualifying 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.

### Current 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 7, 2024
2. Grades PK3-PK4: October 10, 2024

### New FARM Applicants *(New to DCPS or no prior SY23-24 FARM application on file)*

New applicants, attending non-CEP schools, are strongly encouraged to have their applications submitted before

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August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 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 at Non-CEP Schools

The balance of student meal accounts that have carried over from the 2023-2024 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, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20002

Students will never be refused a meal or served an alternate meal selection if there are no funds in the student account. The meal will automatically be charged to the student 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, once a student's balance becomes negative, household notifications are made via automated 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 rollover into the next school year. Any payments made will first go to pay off the negative meal balance. DCPS Food and Nutrition Services makes every effort to answer questions related to negative meal balances and repayment.

## Dietary Accommodation Forms

If your student requires a special diet/meal plan for meals served through the USDA Child Nutrition Program due to a food allergy, medical condition, or philosophical/religious need, we need to know about it. Please complete a dietary accommodation from [dcps.dc.gov/page/dietary-accommodations](https://dcps.dc.gov/page/dietary-accommodations) and submit the completed form to [dietary.forms@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dietary.forms@k12.dc.gov) or to your school's cafeteria manager. Please allow time for 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](mailto:food.dcps@k12.dc.gov).

Sincerely,

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

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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.

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

DCPS Community Eligibility Provision Schools (CEP) for School Year 2024-2025

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.

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

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|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 68. Payne Elementary School                   | 82. Stanton Elementary School     |
| 69. Phelps ACE High School                    | 83. Stevens Early Learning Center |
| 70. Plummer Elementary School                 | 84. Stuart-Hobson Middle School   |
| 71. Powell Elementary School                  | 85. Takoma Education Campus       |
| 72. Randle Highlands Elementary School        | 86. Thomas Elementary School      |
| 73. Raymond Elementary School                 | 87. Thomson Elementary School     |
| 74. River Terrace Education Campus            | 88. Truesdell Elementary School   |
| 75. Ron Brown College Preparatory High School | 89. Tubman Elementary School      |
| 76. Roosevelt High School                     | 90. Turner Elementary School      |
| 77. Savoy Elementary School                   | 91. Van Ness Elementary School    |
| 78. Seaton Elementary School                  | 92. Walker-Jones Education Campus |
| 79. Simon Elementary School                   | 93. Watkins Elementary School     |
| 80. Smothers Elementary School                | 94. Wheatley Education Campus     |
| 81. Sousa Middle School                       | 95. Whittier Elementary School    |
|                                               | 96. HD Woodson High School        |

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, *USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form* which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or

(2) **fax:**

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

(3) **email:**

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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