

Food Service

Free /Reduced Meal Program

The Free/Reduced Priced Meal Program is available to help families who believe they may qualify, with the cost of school meals. Families **MUST reapply for meal benefits each school year.**

- **Each student** who was eligible the previous year should obtain an application for free/reduced meal benefits at the beginning of the current school year. You will only need to fill out **ONE** application per household. This form can be returned to any Meridian School Office or can be mailed to Lisa Reber School Food Service Office.
- **Applications will be available** at the Meridian School District Office beginning **July 17, 2023**. Complete your application early, this will ensure your application is processed before school begins.
- **Applications** will also be posted on the School Food Service Web Page (www.meridian223.org) under the food service department beginning **July 17, 2023**
- **Each school** will have applications available throughout the school year in the event you did not submit an application at the beginning of the year.
- **Once an application** is approved, students may eat breakfast and lunch according to their status of free, reduced, or paid.
- **Direct Certification** If your family has a Snap or Tanf number, you will be Direct Certified by the state and receive free lunch and breakfast meals. The Direct Certification list is published in July of each year. If you are a Direct Cert family, you do not have to apply for free meal benefits. You will be notified of your eligibility through a letter of Direct Certification from the Food Service Director.
- **Negative Accounts** Families will be responsible to pay for any items purchased **before** the approval of the application. Once an application is approved, the free or reduced price applies **only** to the lunch being served for the day. If your student(s) choose **not** to purchase the lunch of the day and purchase ala carte items instead, families will be responsible to pay for those items. **If a student brings a cold lunch and would like milk the cost is 40 cents and you will need to have money in their account to cover this expense.**

Please remember, if you have students that were approved for meal benefits during the 2022/2023 school year, they will only remain on **the previous year's status for the first 30 days (September 21, 2023) of school** all students must reapply every school year.

Lisa Reber
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