

# School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

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## OVERVIEW

### *What is it?*

A federally funded program that offers nutritionally balanced meals to all children, primarily at school. Free and reduced price meals are available to students from low income families.

### *Who is it for?*

Children enrolled in public schools, non-profit private schools and residential child caring institutions.

### *Where are applications taken?*

Applications for children are available at public schools or other sponsoring organizations.

## INTRODUCTION

The National School Lunch Program was established in 1946 to ensure proper nutrition for children. In 1975, the School Breakfast Program was implemented. Both programs provide cash subsidies to pay for meals and donate commodity goods to sponsoring organizations. Students either pay for their meal at full or reduced price or receive their meals free based on family size and income.

All North Carolina public school systems sponsor School Lunch and Breakfast programs. All schools except for one participate in the School Lunch Program and 98.6% of schools participate in the School Breakfast Program. In addition, just over half of the public schools have chosen to designate themselves as "Team Nutrition Schools." To be a Team Nutrition School, the Principal, Cafeteria Manager, and the teaching staff commit to providing sound nutritional education in both the cafeteria and the classroom.

## BENEFITS/ SERVICES

Nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches are provided at either a reasonable cost, free, or reduced-price to low income children. Many schools augment the provision of the nutritionally balanced meals with educational activities in the both the cafeteria and the classroom. Lifelong health and sound nutrition decision making is the goal of these coordinated efforts.

## APPLICATIONS

Applications for children are available at public schools or other sponsoring organizations. Public schools and sponsoring organizations that want to participate in the program should contact the NC Department of Public Instruction, Child Nutrition Services Section at 919-715-1920.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible to participate in the school breakfast or lunch program, students must attend a participating school or other sponsoring organization. Students who are from low income families can receive their meals free or at a reduced price based on their family size and income. The United States Department of Agriculture develops these standards on an annual basis.

Students who are residents of child caring institutions receive their meals without a charge based on their status as a “family of one.”

**Income Eligibility**

To receive free breakfasts and lunches, the income of the children’s family must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Children with family incomes between 130-185 percent of poverty can purchase meals at a reduced price, not to exceed 40 cents for lunch and 30 cents for breakfast. Following are the eligible income levels for July 1, 1999- June 30, 2000.

Household Size	Monthly Income	
	<u>Free</u>	<u>Reduced Price</u>
1	\$893	\$1,271
2	1,199	1,706
3	1,504	2,140
4	1,810	2,575
5	2,115	3,010
6	2,421	3,445
7	2,726	3,879
8	3,032	4,314
Each additional person	add \$306	add \$435

These guidelines are revised annually.

*Note: Beginning January 1, 2000, all kindergarten children are eligible for free breakfast, regardless of their family’s income.*

**PRIORITIZATION SYSTEM**

All eligible children who attend a participatory school or other sponsoring organization are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

**RESOURCE ELIGIBILITY**

There are no resource eligibility requirements for this program.

**NUMBERS**

More than 740,000 children participate in school lunch and 260,000 participate in

<b>SERVED</b>	school breakfast each school day. All public school systems sponsor school lunch and breakfast programs, although not every school participates.
<b>APPEAL RIGHTS</b>	Students and sponsoring organizations can appeal decisions regarding family size and income classification to the local Board of Education.
<b>FINANCING</b>	Approximately \$420 million is spent annually in North Carolina on School Lunch and School Breakfast programs.  Federal: Approximately \$200 million State: Approximately \$7 million Individual purchases: Approximately \$210 million
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	These programs are administered at the national level by US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, and at the state level, by the NC Department of Public Instruction. Locally, Boards of Education, Residential Child Caring Institutions, and private non-profit agencies administer the programs.
<b>SOURCES OF LAW</b>	Federal statute: 42 USC 1751 et. seq. (National School Lunch Act of 1946) 42 USC 1771 et. seq. (Child Nutrition Act of 1966) Federal regulations: 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220 State statute: NCGS 115c-263 and 264 State policy: 16 NCAC 6H.0004
<b>FOR MORE INFORMATION</b>	NC Department of Public Instruction Child Nutrition Services Section 301 N. Wilmington St. Raleigh, NC 27601-2825 Phone: 919-715-1920

