2023/2024 Meal Program will consist of Free, Reduced and Full Paid. Eligibility is determined by household size and annual income.

You can apply online for the 2023/2024 Free & Reduced Program & Pay Online as of August 5, 2023

(2022/2023) applications will expire on 10/2/2023, re-apply ASAP)

www.billingsschools.org

Click - PARENT

Click - MEALTIME ONLINE

Click - “Orange Box” Meal Time Apply Online

Click – Create Account – create User Name and Password to apply online

✓ If you do not have a User Name and Password, you will need to create one.
✓ You will need the Student ID Number for those student(s) attending Billings Public Schools. If you do not have this number please check with the school secretary
✓ When filling out an online application please do not use a nickname. Use only the legal name of student.

Please call us if we can be of any assistance.

Nutrition Service Office

406-281-5879
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Billings Public Schools offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs $1.50; lunch costs Elementary $2.90; Middle and High School $3.10. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is $0.30 for breakfast and $0.40 for lunch. This packet includes an application for free or reduced price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR reduced price MEALS?
   - All children in households receiving benefits from Montana SNAP, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or Montana TANF, are eligible for free meals.
   - Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
   - Children participating in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
   - Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
   - Children may receive free or reduced price meals if your household's income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Yearly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$26,973</td>
<td>$2,248</td>
<td>$519</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$36,482</td>
<td>$3,041</td>
<td>$702</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$45,991</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$84,027</td>
<td>$7,003</td>
<td>$1,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$93,536</td>
<td>$7,796</td>
<td>$1,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each additional person:</td>
<td>$9,609</td>
<td>$793</td>
<td>$183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY? Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail Billings Public Schools, homeless liaison, Kevin Brook 406-281-6719.

3. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: School Office or Kitchen

4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS? No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Julia Wilson 406-281-5879 immediately.

5. CAN I APPLY ONLINE? Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same
information as the paper application. Visit www.billingsschools.org to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Julia Wilson 406-281-5879 or email wilsonjr@billingsschools.org if you have any questions about the online application.

6. MY CHILD’S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE? Yes! Your child’s application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year, through 10/2/2023. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not send in a new application that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full price for meals.

7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please send in an application.

8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.

9. IF I DON’T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.

10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL’S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: [Craig VanNice CFO 406-281-5116 415 North 30th Billings MT 59101.

11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced price meals.

12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make $1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made $900, put down that you made $1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.

13. WHAT IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE NO INCOME TO REPORT? Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

14. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.

15. WHAT IF THERE ISN’T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application. Contact Nutrition Services 406-281-5879 to receive a second application.

16. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for Montana SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call Montana Public Assistance Helpline at 1-888-706-1535.

If you have other questions or need help, call 406-281-5879

Sincerely,

Craig VanNice
CFO/Clerk Billings Public Schools

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
Application Instructions – Free and Reduced-price School Meals

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the application for free or reduced-price school meals. You only need to submit one application per household if all of your school-aged children attend Billings Public Schools. The application must be filled out completely to certify your children for free or reduced-price school meals. Please follow these instructions in order! Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on your application. If at any time you are not sure what to do next, please contact School Nutrition Office at 406-281-5879. Please use a pen (not a pencil) to complete the application and print clearly.

STEP 1: List ALL CHILDREN in the Household.

Tell us how many infants, children, and school students live in your household. They do NOT have to be related to you to be a part of your household.

Who should I list here?
- Children age 18 or under (related or unrelated) that are supported with the household’s income;
- Children in your care under a foster arrangement, or who qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway youth;
- Students attending Billings Public Schools, all household members regardless of age.

- List each child’s name. For each child, print their first name, middle initial, and last name. Use one line of the application for each child. If there are more children present than lines on the application, attach a second piece of paper with all required information for the additional children.
- Is the child a student? If attending school, indicate the name of school and grade level for each child and mark ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ under the column titled “Student” to tell us which children attend Billings Public Schools.
- Are any children homeless, runaway, or migrant? If you believe any child listed in this section may meet this description, please mark the “Homeless, Migrant, Runaway” box next to the child’s name and complete all steps of the application. Homeless, Migrant, Runaway status must be confirmed with the appropriate program staff. If the school district cannot confirm your student’s homeless, migrant, or runaway status, then the school district will contact you to complete an income-based application. You may choose to provide income information now in order to prevent the school district from potentially needing to contact you later.
- Do you have any foster children? If any children listed are foster children, mark the “Foster Child” box next to the child’s name. Foster children who live with you may count as members of your household and should be listed on your application. If you are only applying for foster children, after completing STEP 1, skip to STEP 4 of the application and STEP 4 of these instructions. Note: Adopted children are not considered foster children. A foster child is a minor child who has been taken into state custody and placed with a state-licensed adult, who cares for the child in place of their parent or guardian.

STEP 2: Participation in SNAP, TANF or FDPIR?

If anyone in your household participates in any of the programs below, your children are eligible for free school meals:
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

- IF NO ONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:
  - Mark NO in the box and skip to STEP 3 of these instructions and STEP 3 of your application.
  - Leave the MT Case# box blank.

- IF ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:
  - Mark YES in the box and provide a MT case number for SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. You only need to write one case number. If you participate in SNAP and do not know your case number, contact: 1-866-850-1556. You must provide a MT case number on your application if you marked the box YES.
  - Skip to STEP 4 of these instructions and STEP 4 of your application.

STEP 3: Report Income for ALL Household Members

A. Child Income

Report all income earned by children. Refer to the chart titled “Sources of Income for Children” in these instructions and report the combined gross income, for ALL children in your household listed in STEP 1, in the box marked “Total Child Income”. Only count foster children’s personal income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household. It is optional for the household to list foster children living with them as part of the household.

What is Child Income?
Child income is money received from outside your household that is paid directly to your children on a regular/frequent basis. Infrequent earnings, such as occasional babysitting or mowing lawns, are not counted as income. Many households do not have any child income. Use the chart below to determine if your household has child income to report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Child Income</th>
<th>Sources of Income for Children</th>
<th>Example(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular earnings from work</td>
<td>A child has a job where they earn a salary or wages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Disability Payments</td>
<td>A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives social security benefits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Survivor’s Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from persons outside the household</td>
<td>A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from any other source</td>
<td>A child receives income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adult Income - Who should I list here?
When filling out this section, please include all members in your household who are:
- Living with you and share income and expenses, even if not related and even if they do not receive income of their own.
- College students temporarily away
Do not include:
- People who live with you but are not supported by your household’s income, and who do not contribute income to your household.

B. Adult Income
Print the first and last name of all Household Members not listed in STEP 1 even if no one receives income.

Sources of Income

Report earnings from work. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income from work in the "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the money received from working at jobs. If you are a self-employed business or farm owner, you will report your net income. This is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts or revenue.

Report income from Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony" field on the application. Do not report the value of any cash value public assistance benefits NOT listed on the chart. If income is received from child support or alimony, only court-ordered payments should be reported here. Informal but regular payments should be reported as “other” income in the next part.

How do I fill in the amount and how often it is received?

For each type of income:
- Report all amounts as gross income ONLY. Report income in whole dollars. Do not include cents.
  - Gross income is the total income received before taxes or deductions.
  - Many people think of income as the amount they “take home” and not the total, “gross” amount. Make sure that the income you report on this application has NOT been reduced for taxes, insurance premiums, or any other amounts taken from your pay.
- Write a “0” in any fields where there is no income to report. Any income fields left empty or blank will be counted as zeroes. If you write ‘0’ or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. If local officials have known or available information that your household income was reported incorrectly, your application will be verified (chosen to provide proof of income) for cause.
- Mark the circle to the right of the dollar amount to indicate how often income is received.

Report income from Pensions/Retirement/All other income. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these Instructions and report all income that applies in the "Pensions/Retirement/All Other Income" field on the application.

Use this chart to determine if your household has income to report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Income for Adults</th>
<th>Earnings from Work</th>
<th>Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony</th>
<th>Pensions/Retirement/All Other Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross income from salary, wages, or cash bonuses</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits</td>
<td>Social Security (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net income from self-employment (farm or business)</td>
<td>Worker’s compensation</td>
<td>Private pensions or disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strike benefits</td>
<td>Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</td>
<td>Income from trusts or estates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are in the U.S. Military:</td>
<td>Cash assistance from State or local government</td>
<td>Annuities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA or privatized housing allowances)</td>
<td>Alimony payments</td>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowances for off-base housing, food, and clothing</td>
<td>Child support payments</td>
<td>Earned Interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Veteran’s benefits</td>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular cash payments from outside household</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Report total household size.
Enter the total number of household members in the field "Total Household Members (Children and Adults)". This number MUST be equal to the number of household members listed in STEP 1 and STEP 3. If there are any members of your household that you have not listed on the application, go back and add them. It is very important to list all household members, as the size of your household determines your income cutoff for free and reduced-price meals.

D. Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number.
The household’s primary wage earner or another adult household member must enter the last four digits of their Social Security Number in the space provided. You are eligible to apply for benefits even if you do not have a Social Security Number. If no adult household member has a Social Security Number, leave this space blank and mark the box to the right labeled “Check if no SSN”.

STEP 4: Contact Information and Adult Signature.
All applications must be signed by an adult member of the household. By signing the application, that household member is promising that all information has been truthfully and completely reported. Please also make sure you have read the use of information and civil rights statements on the back of the application.

1. Provide your contact information. Write your current address in the fields provided if this information is available. If you have no permanent address, this does not make your children ineligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional, but helps us reach you quickly if we need to contact you.
2. Sign and print your name. Print and sign your name in the designated boxes as the adult completing the form.
3. Write today’s date. In the space provided, write today’s date in the box.
4. Share Children’s Racial and Ethnic Identities (optional). On the back of the application, we ask you to share information about your children’s race and ethnicity.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
**2023-24 Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals** Complete one application per household and return to the school. Please use pen.

### Definitions:
- **Children in Household:** Any infant, child or student up to 12th grade that lives in your household.
- **Household Member:** Anyone who is living with you who shares income and expenses, even if not related.

### Step 1
List ALL CHILDREN in the household. If more space is required for additional names, attach another sheet of paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's First Name</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>Child's Last Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Student?</th>
<th>Homeless (or) Runaway</th>
<th>Migrant</th>
<th>Foster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 2
Do any household members (including you) currently participate in one or more of the following Assistance Programs: SNAP or TANF or FDPIR?

- [ ] NO
- [ ] YES

If NO household member participates in SNAP or TANF or FDPIR, complete STEP 3.

If YES, write your SNAP or TANF or FDPIR case number here:

MT Case #: ____________

### Step 3
Report Income for ALL Household Members. Skip this step if you wrote a SNAP or TANF or FDPIR case number in STEP 2.

#### A. Child Income
Sometimes children in the household earn income. Please include the TOTAL income earned by all Child Household Members listed in STEP 1 here.

#### B. Adult Income (Including yourself)
List ALL Household Members not listed in STEP 1 (including yourself) even if they do not receive income. For each Household Member listed, if they do receive income, report total gross income (before taxes) for each source in whole dollars (no cents) only. If they do not receive income from any source, write '0.' If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (proving) that there is no income to report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First and Last Name of Adult Household Member</th>
<th>Earnings from Work</th>
<th>Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony</th>
<th>Pension/Retirement/All Other Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly</td>
<td>2X Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### C. Total Household Members
(Children and Adults)

#### D. Last Four Digits of Social Security Number (SSN)
(Primary Wage Earner or Other Adult Household Member)

### Step 4
Contact Information and Adult Signature.

I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws.

Mailing Address: ____________________________  Apt # _________  City: ___________  State: _______  Zip: _________  Daytime Phone and Email (optional): ____________________________

Printed Name of Adult Completing Form: ____________________________

Signature of Adult Completing Form: ____________________________

Today’s Date: ____________________________

### School Use Only
School District Must Complete This Section.

Signature of Determining Official: ____________________________  Date: ___________

Signature of Certifying Official: ____________________________  Date: ___________

Signature of Verifying Official: ____________________________  Date: ___________

Directly Certified (DC) from DCA/Source Records: [ ] SNAP DC [ ] TANF DC [ ] FDPIR DC [ ] Homeless/Runaway DC [ ] Migrant DC [ ] Foster DC

Categorical Eligibility: Foster Child [ ] Case Number: ____________________________

Total Household Income: $ ____________ per ____________

Household Size: ____________________________

Application Approved For: [ ] Pro Meal [ ] Reduced Price Meal [ ] Application Denied

**Annual Income Conversion**

- Weekly $X.52
- Bi-Weekly X 26
- Twice a Month X 12

Convert to annual income using the different frequencies of income listed.
Collecting racial and ethnic information helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children’s eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

Ethnicity: □ Hispanic or Latino □ Not Hispanic or Latino

Race: □ American Indian or Alaskan Native □ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander □ Asian □ White □ Black or African American

The contact information below is solely to file a complaint of discrimination

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/ad-3027.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:

*Mailing
deadline:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC. 20250-9410

FAX:
(833) 256-1669 or (202) 690-7442; or

EMAIL:
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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**Free/Reduced Price School Meal Application**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Annual</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Twice a Month</th>
<th>Every Two Weeks</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$26,573</td>
<td>$2,248</td>
<td>$1,124</td>
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<td>$7,795</td>
<td>$3,898</td>
<td>$3,598</td>
<td>$1,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each additional family member</td>
<td>$9,509</td>
<td>$795</td>
<td>$387</td>
<td>$366</td>
<td>$183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Use of Information Statement**

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that we use information from this application to see who qualifies for free or reduced price meals. We can only approve complete forms. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them deliver program benefits to your household. Inspectors and law enforcement may also use your information to make sure that program rules are met. Please be sure to provide the last four numbers of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the adult does not have one, ‘Check if no Social Security Number.’ Applications for a foster child do not need to list a Social Security number. Applications for children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social Security number. Some children qualify for free meals without an application. Please contact your school to get free meals for a foster child, and children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway

Return completed form to your child’s school.