



Southeast Dubois County School Corporation

Nutrition & Food Service Information

We invite all students to dine with us twice daily. We offer delicious and nutritious meals that provide “fuel for learning” that students need to make the most of their school experience. Meals offered daily meet or exceed the federal, state and local dietary guidelines set by the USDA that are both wholesome and of high quality. All meals are served in an efficient, friendly manner, in a respectful environment that gives the students time to sit, relax, and enjoy their meal before returning to their daily tasks of the school day. We look forward to welcoming your child(ren) to the cafeteria. We’re all set for a new school year of great food and outstanding service. Now is the perfect time to encourage your child(ren) to choose school meals!

School Breakfast Program

Breakfast is available to students at each school by 7:30 a.m. each school day. Breakfast is a great way to kick off your child(ren)’s school day! School Breakfast will give your child(ren) more energy, keep their body healthy, and help improve their school day.

The “Recipe” for students to perform better in their classrooms and succeed at school is to provide them with the nutrition necessary for healthy growth of their minds and bodies. Growing minds need fuel to remain focused and open to learning. When children eat a healthy, well-balanced diet, studies have shown that they enjoy the benefits of improved attentiveness and cognition, plus they have more energy to perform at their best. Well-nourished students have higher test scores, increased school attendance, improved concentration, and better classroom behavior. Students who are physically fit, sleep better and are better able to handle the physical and emotional challenges that they encounter during the day. In accordance with the meal pattern requirements established by the USDA, a variety of appealing, delicious and nutritious meals and food items are offered daily in a courteous and friendly manner, within a safe and pleasant environment, to help provide the “fuel for learning” that students need to contribute to their academic success and overall well-being.

National School Lunch Program

The Nutrition & Food Services Program of the Southeast Dubois County School Corporation participates in the National School Lunch Program, which is a federally funded meal program administered by the USDA. The program assists in providing nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals to students each school day. The regulations and guidelines governing the school meal program are not set locally, but are set by the United States Department of Agriculture. The meal pattern requirement includes certain serving sizes of 5 meal components:

Milk	8 ozs.	Fat free or Low-fat
Protein	1-2 ozs. per day with a weekly requirement	Meat, fish, poultry, cheese (Breakfast combines protein and bread/grain, may serve either or both)
Bread or Grain	1-2 ozs. per day with a weekly requirement	Must be at least 51% whole grain to be counted.
Vegetable	1/2 to 1 cup per day depending on grade level	Requirements include the types of vegetables served. Red/Orange, Dark Green, Starchy, Peas, Beans, or Legumes. Must be served each week at correct serving sizes.
Fruits	1/2 to 1 cup per day depending on grade level	Not more than ½ can be juice.

Offer vs Serve

In an effort to increase the acceptance and consumption of nutritious foods, "offer versus serve" (OVS) is implemented in each of our cafeterias. Students have food choices available which encourage them to select a meal that is more specific to their food preferences. OVS allows students to decline some of the food items offered in a reimbursable lunch or breakfast. The goals of OVS are to increase customer satisfaction and reduce food waste by permitting students to choose the foods they want to eat. To have a qualifying lunch, a student must select at least three full portions of the five meal components offered that day, or they may select ALL five meal components. To have a qualifying breakfast, a student must select three full portions of the four meal components offered that day. If a student takes fewer than the minimum number of required meal components, they must pay a la carte prices for each food item they selected. With OVS, students are able to select the milk of their choice, and also have an option of no milk, as long as at least 3 food components are selected. **USDA Meal Pattern does require each student to have a ½ cup fruit and / or vegetable with their lunch each day; therefore each student MUST select a ½ cup fruit and / or vegetable each day for both lunch and breakfast.**

[Offer vs Serve Breakfast-English](#)

[Offer vs Serve Breakfast - Spanish](#)

[Offer vs Serve Lunch - English](#)

[Offer vs Serve Lunch - Spanish](#)

All guidelines established by the USDA must be followed daily, including making sure that students get an exact serving size of each of their meal items, no more, no less. The portion size that the students receive is aligned to their age group calorie needs to avoid excess calories.

[School Breakfast Meal Pattern Chart](#)

[National School Lunch Program Meal Pattern Chart](#)

<u>School Year 2024 - 2025 Meal Prices</u>	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Free-Student	\$0.00	\$0.00
Reduced Price - Student	\$0.30	\$0.40
Paid-Junior/Senior High Student	\$1.80	\$2.75
Paid- Elementary Student	\$1.70	\$2.60
Adult	\$2.50	\$4.60
Extra Milk	\$0.65	\$0.65

Prices for the 2024-2025 school year were increased in compliance with the Equity in School Lunch Pricing Provision of the Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010. To ensure that federal funds received for free and reduced price meals are not diverted to cover meal costs of the students who do not qualify for meal assistance or those of adult meals. All meals and ala carte items are reasonably priced to encourage participation while maintaining a self-supporting operation. The operation of the Nutrition & Food Services Program is required to be conducted in a fiscally responsible and self-supporting manner.

Free & Reduced Meal Application

All schools that participate in the NSLP, must make free and reduced priced meals available to eligible students; annually, households are offered the opportunity to apply for federal assistance, which may result in free or reduced price school meals. Free and Reduced Price Meals are available to families who believe they may qualify based on income guidelines determined by the federal government each year. If a household chooses to apply, they must complete a “2024-2025 Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals”. Application forms will be available to all households as part of their back to school online registration. The **online application** is the **recommended** way to apply. In addition, applications will also be available upon request (812-817-0900) for the 2024-2025 school year beginning early August 2024 . We are unable to accept applications by phone, fax or scanned email.

To avoid incurring an interruption of benefits, a new application **MUST** be completed and submitted each school year. Federal regulations require that a new application must be completed, approved and on file each school year to receive meal benefits. Benefits from the previous school year do carryover for the first 30 school days of a new school year for meals. All **carryover benefits will expire on Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 19, 2024**. Students who do not have a current / new application on file by September 19, 2024 will be required to pay full price for all meals until a new application is submitted and approved.

Only **ONE** application is all that needs to be submitted for each household. All applications **MUST** be completed correctly with **ALL** required information before they can be processed (be sure to include everyone in your household, and all **GROSS** income). Free and reduced meals cannot be provided until an application has been officially approved. If any information is missing, the application will be returned to the applicant for the application to be completed correctly, and then resubmitted for processing. You will be notified by either mail or email of your child(ren)'s eligibility for free or reduced-priced meals. Until you receive notification, you must provide your child(ren) with a lunch or lunch money --- your child(ren) will pay full price for meals until their application has been approved. A household may apply for benefits at any time during the school year. Note: For any child(ren) in a household who might be Migrant, Homeless, or Runaway, please contact the superintendent's office at 812-817-0900.

Factors considered in the application process are **total** household size and **total** household **gross** income. Household size is the total number of **ALL** persons (either related or unrelated) who live in your house and share living expenses, including each parent, all children, grandparents, all other relatives, and all other unrelated people, etc. living in the household. **NOTE:** A household is defined as a group of related or unrelated individuals who are living in the same household, and whose members share housing, significant income, and expenses such as rent, utilities, and food. Each household **MUST** provide the total amount of current gross income being earned by each member of the household, plus indicate how often the money is being received – weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly.

The **GROSS** income is before taxes (**NOT YOUR TAKE-HOME PAY**) is **ALL** income received by each household member including wages, social security, pension, unemployment, welfare, child support, alimony, and any other cash income during the last month.

It is important to remember that every application is required to be signed by the adult submitting the application, and **MUST** include the last four digits of that adult's Social Security Number. Incomplete applications cannot be processed. Applications will be reviewed on a timely basis; however, it may take 10 school days for an application to be reviewed and approved. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Other programs may require separate proof of your meal status qualification. Be sure to keep your letter indicating your free or reduced price school meal eligibility. It is important that you save your notification letter.**

Textbook Assistance -Not Applicable

This section should **NOT** be completed. Public schools no longer charge for books or extra curricular materials.

Sharing Information with Other Programs Consent

In order to maintain the integrity of the Child Nutrition Program, the Federal guidelines require the Nutrition & Food Services Program to annually conduct verification of Free and Reduced Price Meal benefit applications for accuracy. Anyone selected for verification who does not respond with the required information and income documentation within the specified time period, will have their child(ren)'s benefit(s) canceled, which will make parents responsible for all meals for the school year. This helps ensure that households do not falsely represent their income and living situations.

Those who qualify for either Free or Reduced meals are requested to complete and return the consent form for [Sharing Information with Other Programs](#). This will allow the school to release information that shows a child(ren) is receiving free or reduced priced benefits under the NSLP. Therefore annually, the option is available to sign and return the "Sharing Information With Other Programs" form to provide the necessary consent to release information contained in your student's free and reduced price school meal application for other types of assistance through various school and community programs. (All information from Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications is confidential, and cannot be shared without the applicant's written consent.)

Procedures for Student Lunch/Meal Account

As mandated from the USDA, schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must have administrative guidelines and procedures for all meal charges. The [Charge Procedure](#) for the Southeast Dubois County School Corporation can be found in each student handbook and posted online at SED/Ranger Cafe.

Prepaying money into your child(ren)'s meal account helps eliminate parents' worry of lost money, and also ensures that money is always available in the meal account. The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation utilizes a pre-pay meal system. Your student's meal account is designed to be a prepaid account, and it operates as a Debit System, meaning money should be placed in your student's meal account prior to the days your child(ren) intends to make meal purchases. The student may use money from their account to purchase meals as well as a' la carte items. A' la carte purchases are not permitted if the account has insufficient funds. We continue to use the Harmony based point of service program, which allows parents online access to check student meal account balances, view their child(ren)'s food purchases, and make credit card payments (a nominal convenience fee of \$3 per lunch transaction applies.). Parents are encouraged to receive low balance reminders from Harmony Family Access by setting up a "Push Notification" in each of their child(ren)'s account(s). The meal program is NOT a charge system. It is every family's responsibility to always carry a positive balance in their child(ren)'s meal account(s).

Nutrition & Wellness

The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation strives to **educate** students as well as their families about the National School Lunch Program nutrition requirements and how nutrition affects learning.

- The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation **empowers** students through this education to make good choices when it comes to their meals and to understand that they have the ability to CHOOSE healthy options.
- The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation **inspires excellence** by challenging students of all ages to embrace a healthy lifestyle and to recognize that there is an important connection between eating nutritious meals and increasing their ability to learn.
- The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation is dedicated to ensure that all children regardless of economic status, cultural diversity or special needs have access to healthy meals to promote learning readiness through the following measures:
 - Meeting student preferences
 - Providing healthy choices
 - Complying with federal program regulations
 - Ensuring only quality products are purchased per specifications
 - Operating under fiscally sound principles

- Offering reasonable prices
- Meeting or exceeding food safety standards

The Southeast Dubois School Corporation recognizes the important relationship of nutritional integrity, physical activity and good health to student academic performance; and is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular activity as part of the total learning environment. Improved health increases student performance potential. We hope to facilitate student learning about nutrition through healthy food selection at meal times, along with nutrition education, to enhance their growth and learning today, and promote good health in the future. Our schools support their students' learning and contribute to their health by supporting and promoting good nutrition, healthy eating, physical activity, and healthy habits for lifelong nutrition and fitness practices. Dedicated to the wellness of its stakeholders, an active Wellness Committee comprised of teachers / school staff, students, parents, administrators, community members, school board members, and the district school nurse, have developed and continue to maintain a [Wellness Policy](#) that is focused on improving the health and wellbeing of all its students and staff members. Each school year, there is a review process of the Wellness Policy in order to implement and amend the policy to continually encourage the choice to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The School health Index is used as a self-assessment and planning-guide. Family and community stakeholders participation in review and implementation of the Wellness Policy is always welcome. Anyone having an interest in wellness issues impacting Southeast Dubois County School Corporation students may contact any of the schools. It takes a community-wide effort to ensure positive student outcomes.

Special Meal Accommodations

A Special Meal Accommodation form known as the "[Special Dietary Needs Medical Statement](#)" must be completed by a physician for any meal accommodation. This form would indicate items to be substituted or eliminated from a child's diet. Please reach out to your student(s) school's cafeteria manager about specific dietary needs. If your child has a milk allergy only complete the "[Milk Substitution Form](#)". The completed forms need to be forwarded to the corporation nurse for processing.

Nutrition and Food Services wishes you and your child(ren) a healthy and productive year!

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-0>

508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.