

UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS

The School Committee is committed to providing students with healthy, nutritious meals each day so they can focus on school work, while also maintaining the financial integrity of meal programs, and to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements of the USDA Child Nutrition Program.

The District will participate in the National School Lunch Program, the Massachusetts Universal Free Meals Program, and other food programs that may become available to assure that all students in the schools receive healthy, nutritious school meals.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, the District will provide universal free meals to all students in the District.

Students seeking additional meals or a la carte items will be charged accordingly for those additional items.

Each student in the District is entitled to (1) free breakfast and (1) free lunch.

- It remains important that families complete the annual Household Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals. This form allows the school district to serve families more effectively for other important programs such as P-EBT benefits, fee waivers for school district programs/services, (as determined by each school district), state and federal grant eligibility, and more.
- Districts participating through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications.

As required by state and federal regulations, the School Committee approves this policy statement pertaining to eligibility for universal free school meals for all students in the District.

CROSS REF: EFE, Civil Rights Complaint Policy for Child Nutrition Programs

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760);
Child Nutrition Act of 1966; P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended;
USDA School Meal Program Guidelines May 2017;
M.G.L. 71:72; 15:1G; 69:1C;
[Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023 7053-1909](#)

SOURCE: MASC – Complete rewrite 2023, edited by Gateway Policy Committee March 2024