LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience ***in a Public School Setting***

Regional School District #18 announced today its policy for determining eligibility of children who may receive free or reduced-price meals served under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), or free milk served under the Special Milk Program (SMP).

Note: For SY 2024-25, reduced-price eligible students enrolled in a school participating in the SBP and/or NSLP will be able to receive one school breakfast meal and one school lunch per school day free of charge.

Local school officials have adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) for family size and income criteria for determining eligibility. The following income guidelines will be used in Connecticut from **July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025,** for determining participant's eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals and free milk in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP).

Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs: July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025

Free meals/milk						Reduced-price meals					
Household size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income	Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	19,578	1,632	816	753	377	1	27,861	2,322	1,161	1,072	536
2	26,572	2,215	1,108	1,022	511	2	37,814	3,152	1,576	1,455	728
3	33,566	2,798	1,399	1,291	646	3	47,767	3,981	1,991	1,838	919
4	40,560	3,380	1,690	1,560	780	4	57,720	4,810	2,405	2,220	1,110
5	47,554	3,963	1,982	1,829	915	5	67,673	5,640	2,820	2,603	1,302
6	54,548	4,546	2,273	2,098	1,049	6	77,626	6,469	3,235	2,986	1,493
7	61,542	5,129	2,565	2,367	1,184	7	87,579	7,299	3,650	3,369	1,685

Holly McCalla, Business Manager
49 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371
T: 860-434-7238 F: 860-434-9959 E: mccallah@region18.org www.region18.org

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8	68,536	5,712	2,856	2,636	1,318	8	97,532	8,128	4,064	3,752	1,876
Each additional family member	+ 6,994	+ 583	+ 292	+ 269	+ 135	Each additional family member	+ 9,953	+ 830	+ 415	+ 383	+ 192

The income calculations above are based on the following formulas:

- monthly income is calculated by dividing the annual income by 12;
- twice monthly income is computed by dividing annual income by 24;
- income received every two weeks is calculated by dividing annual income by 26; and
- weekly income is computed by dividing annual income by 52.

All numbers are rounded upward to the next whole dollar.

Students residing in households with income at or below the levels shown in the chart above are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk. Applications are available on the district website or call your specific school and request one be mailed To apply for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk, households should fill out the application and return it to the school. Applications are available on the district website or call your specific school and request one be mailed. Only one application is required per household and an application for free or reduced-price school meals cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions.

The information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purposes of determining eligibility and for administration and enforcement of the lunch, breakfast, and milk programs. Additionally, all school-aged students in income-eligible households can receive school meal benefits regardless of a student's immigration status and the district/school does not release information for immigration-related purposes in the usual course of operating the CNPs. Note that the district *may* share your eligibility information with education, health, social service, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules. This information may also be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

No application is required if the district directly certifies a student based on a household member receiving assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Temporary

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Family Assistance (TFA) program. All students in these households are eligible for free school meals. The school district will notify households receiving assistance under the SNAP/TFA programs of their eligibility and all enrolled students residing in the household will be offered free school meals unless the household notifies the determining official that it chooses to decline benefits. If any students were not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district or school to have free meal benefits extended to those students. Households receiving SNAP or TFA benefits for their children should only submit an application if they are **not** notified of their eligibility by **September 15, 2024.**

Some students *may* be directly certified for free or reduced-price meals based on HUSKY A (Medicaid). No application is required if the district directly certifies a student based on participation in HUSKY A (Medicaid). Students in these households are likely eligible for free or reduced-priced meal benefits and will be notified of their eligibility and their children will be offered free or reduced-price school meals accordingly, unless the household notifies the determining official that it chooses to decline benefits. If any students were not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district or school to have free or reduced-price school meal benefits extended to those students.

If a student is not directly certified, the household should complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application form. The application for households receiving SNAP or TFA benefits require the SNAP or TFA client ID number and the households may be asked to provide proof of the SNAP or TFA client ID number. The signature of an adult household member is also required.

Students in households participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) may be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Please complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application or contact the determining official for more information. For a tutorial on how to complete the application, visit *How to Fill Out the Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk*.

When known to the district/school, households will be notified of any student's eligibility for free school meals if the individual student is "Other Source Categorically Eligible" because the student is categorized as either: homeless; runaway as defined by law and determined by the district's or school's homeless liaison; or enrolled in an eligible Head Start or pre-kindergarten class as defined by law. Households with students who are categorically eligible under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs should complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application and check-off the relevant box. Questions should be directed to the determining official. For any student not listed on the eligibility notice, the households should contact the school or determining official about any student also eligible under one of these programs or should submit an income application for the other

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students.

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the determining official or school if it chooses to decline the free school meal benefits. If households/students are **not** notified by the district/school of their free meal benefits and they receive benefits under qualifying public assistance programs or under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs, the parent/guardian should contact the determining official for their school.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are categorically eligible for free school meals. A foster parent does not have to complete a free/reduced-price school meal application if they can submit a copy of the legal document or legal court order showing that the student is a foster child. Additionally, a foster child may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced-price school meal benefits, it does not prevent a foster child from receiving free school meals. A foster child's eligibility for free school meals does not automatically extend to all students in the household.

Free and reduced-price school meals application forms for all other households require a statement of total household income, household size, and names of all household members. The last four digits of the social security number of an adult household member must be included or a statement that the household member does not have one. The adult household member must also sign the application certifying that the information provided is correct.

Under the provisions of the policy for determining eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals, the **Business Manager, Holly McCalla, mccallah@region18.org, 860-434-7238,** will review applications and determine students' eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals. If a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the ruling of the determining official, they may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. If they wish to make a formal appeal, a request either orally or in writing, may be made to **Ian Neviaser, Superintendent, neviaseri@region18.org, 860-434-7238** for a hearing to appeal the decision.

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure. Each school and the central office of the school district has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by an interested party.

If a household member becomes unemployed or if household size changes at any time, the household should contact the school to file a new free and reduced-price school meals application. Such changes

may make the students of the household eligible for reduced-price school meals, free school meals, or free milk, if the household income falls at or below the levels shown in the Income Eligibility Guidelines.

Questions regarding the free and reduced-price school meals application process may be directed to the determining official at **860-434-7238**. A video tutorial on how to complete a free and reduced-price school meals application can be viewed at *How to Fill Out the Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk*.

This is the Public Release we will send on **8/30/2024** to the following news media outlets, the local unemployment office, major employers contemplating layoffs, etc.

1. The Day, with link to website
2. Published on the district website

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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:

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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

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