FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EDUCATION AND NUTRITION BENEFITS WITH THE MICHIGAN SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school serves healthy meals each day. For school year 2026-27, we are joining the Michigan School Meals program. This means all students can get one free breakfast and one free lunch free of charge at school each day.

You do not need to fill out an application to get these free meals. However, completing the Education and Nutrition Benefits Application is still very important. Your child may qualify for other benefits, like lower fees at school. Your application can also help the school receive important funding, discounts, and other support programs.

1. WHO CAN GET ADDITIONAL EDUCATION BENEFITS?

- Children in households that get benefits from the Food Assistance Program (FAP), Family Independence Program (FIP), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are eligible.
- Foster children who are under the legal care of a foster agency or court are eligible.
- Children in the Head Start program are eligible.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible.
- Children may also get education benefits if your household income is within the limits of the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines on the chart.

FEDERAL INCOME ELIGIBILITY CHART for School Year 2026-2027

Household Size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	29,526	2,461	568
2	40,034	3,337	770
3	50,542	4,212	972
4	61,050	5,088	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	1,983
Each additional person:	10,508	876	203

2. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY?

   Think about the following questions:

   - Does your family not have a permanent place to live?
   - Are you staying in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary place?
   - Does your family move from place to place during certain seasons for work?
   - Are there children living with you who left their previous home on their own?

   If you think any children in your home fit these descriptions and you have not been told that they will get free meals, please call or e-mail **Kayley Dahring 248.675.3421 or Kayley.dahring@novik12.org**

3. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. *Use one application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve your application if it is not complete, so make sure to fill in all required information. Return the completed application to: **Kimberly Sinclair 25425 Taft road, Novi, MI 48374 or email at** Kimberly.sinclair@novik12.org

4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED THROUGH DIRECT CERTIFICATION? No. But make sure to read the letter carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were not listed on the eligibility letter, contact **Kimberly Sinclair at Kimberly.sinclair@novik12.org** right away.
5. CAN I APPLY ONLINE? Yes! If you can, it's best to fill out the online application instead of the paper one. The online form at Meal Magic asks for the same information and has the same requirements. Go to Meal Magic to get started or to learn more about how to apply online. Contact **Kimberly.sinclair@novik12.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. Yes. Your child's application only lasts for that school year and the first 30 school days of the new school year, **until October 15, 2026**. You must send in a new application unless the school has told you that your child is already approved for this 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, you will not receive extra education benefits, and your school could lose important funding.
7. I GET WIC. DO I NEED TO COMPLETE AN APPLICATION? Children in households that receive WIC may still qualify for other benefits. Please submit an application.
8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may ask you to send written proof of the 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 if the household income drops below the income limit.
10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should first talk with school officials. You can also ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **Benjamin Mainka at** Benjamin.mainka@novik12.org **248.449.1200.**
11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOULD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply.
12. WHAT IF MY INCOME CHANGES FROM MONTH TO MONTH? Write down the amount you normally get. For example, if you usually make $1000 a month but last month you made $900 because you missed work, write $1000. If you normally get overtime, include it. If you only get overtime once in a while, do not include it. If you lost your job or your hours or pay were reduced, list 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 zero. 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? You must report your basic pay and any cash bonuses as income. If you get cash allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, you must include those too. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance. Any combat pay you get because of deployment should also *not* be included as income.
15. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? If you run out of space, write the names of additional household members on another piece of paper and attach it to your application. You may also contact Kimberly.sinclair@novik12.org **or 248.675.4151** to get a second application.
16. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE CAN APPLY FOR? To learn how to apply for the Food Assistance Program (FAP) or other types of help, contact your local assistance office at https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/.

If you have other questions or need help, call **248.675.4182**

Sincerely,

Kimberly Sinclair