



Southeast Dubois School Corporation
432 E. 15th Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532
812.817.0900

Fueling Student Success: Join Us for School Meals

We welcome all students to the cafeteria for breakfast and lunch each school day. Our Nutrition & Food Services team is committed to providing high-quality, nutritious meals that serve as the “fuel for learning,” helping students stay focused, energized, and ready to succeed.

All meals meet or exceed USDA dietary guidelines and are served in a friendly, respectful environment where students can relax and enjoy their meals.

School Breakfast Program

Breakfast is served daily at all schools. A healthy breakfast boosts energy, enhances focus, and supports both health and academic success.

Studies show that students who eat well-balanced meals are more attentive, have higher test scores, better behavior, and improved attendance. Nutrition is a key factor in helping young minds and bodies thrive.

National School Lunch Program

Our schools participate in the National School Lunch Program, a federally funded initiative that provides free or low-cost meals to students each day. Meal guidelines are set by the USDA and require specific servings from five main food components:

- Milk (8 oz. of fat-free or low-fat)
- Protein (1–2 oz. daily; meats, cheese, legumes)
- Bread/Grain (1–2 oz. daily; must be at least 51% whole grain)
- Vegetables (½–1 cup daily; includes a weekly variety of red/orange, dark green, starchy, and legumes)
- Fruits (½–1 cup daily; no more than half can be juice)

Offer vs. Serve (OVS)

To encourage healthy choices and reduce food waste, we follow the “Offer vs. Serve” (OVS) model. This gives students the flexibility to choose what they eat while still receiving a complete, reimbursable meal.

- Lunch: Students must choose at least 3 of the 5 components, and one must be a fruit or vegetable.
- Breakfast: Students must select at least 3 of the 4 items offered, including ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable.
- Students may decline some items or select all, and milk choice is optional under OVS.

Free and Reduced-Price Meal Information

All schools in our district offer free and reduced-price meals to eligible students. To apply, complete the **202-2027 Household Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals** during back-to-school registration. Only **one application per household** is needed and **must include**:

- All household members
- All sources of gross income (before taxes/deductions)
- Frequency of income (weekly, biweekly, twice a month, or monthly)

Benefits from last year **carry over for the first 30 school days** of the new year. These **expire on Tuesday, September 22, 2026**, if a new application isn't approved. Students without a current approval on file by that date will be required to pay full price.

Eligibility notifications will be sent by mail or email. Please keep this letter, as other assistance programs may require proof of meal status.

Important Application Notes:

- A household includes everyone living at the same address and sharing income and expenses.
- Households may apply at any time if their financial situation changes.
- For students who may be Migrant, Homeless, or Runaway, please contact the Superintendent's Office at (812) 817-0900.

Textbook Assistance – Not Applicable. This section should not be completed. Public schools no longer charge for textbooks or extracurricular materials.

Verification

To protect the integrity of the Child Nutrition Program, federal guidelines require schools to verify a sample of Free and Reduced-Price Meal applications each year. If selected for verification, households must provide the requested documentation by the deadline. Failure to do so will result in the termination of benefits, and families will be responsible for paying full price for all meals.

Consent to Share Information with Other Programs

Households approved for meal benefits are encouraged to complete the [Sharing Information with Other Programs](#) consent form. This allows the school to share a student's eligibility status to qualify for other school or community-based assistance programs. All application information is confidential and cannot be shared without written consent.

Student Meal Accounts and Charge Procedures

In accordance with USDA guidelines, all schools must maintain clear procedures for student meal accounts and charges. The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation uses a prepaid debit system for meal purchases.

- Funds must be deposited in advance.
- Accounts can be used for both meals and à la carte items (à la carte purchases not allowed with insufficient funds).
- Managed through **Harmony Family Access**, which provides tools to view balances, monitor purchases, and make credit card payments (\$3 convenience fee per transaction).
- Parents are encouraged to set up **low-balance alerts**.

Meal accounts are **not credit accounts**. Families are responsible for maintaining a **positive balance** at all times. Full charge procedures are outlined in the student handbook and online at SED/Ranger Café.

The full [charge procedure](#) can be found in the student handbook and online at SED/Ranger Café.

Special Meal Accommodations

For students with specific dietary needs, the following forms are required:

- [Special Dietary Needs Medical Statement](#) – Must be completed by a physician and submitted for any dietary accommodation (e.g., allergies, restrictions).
- [Milk Substitution Form](#) – For milk allergies only.

Contact your student's cafeteria manager with questions. Completed forms must be submitted to the cafeteria manager and the corporation nurse for processing.

Nutrition & Wellness Commitment

The Southeast Dubois County School Corporation is committed to educating students and families about the importance of nutrition and its direct impact on learning and well-being. Through the National School Lunch Program, we:

- Promote student choice by offering a variety of healthy meal options.
- Comply with all federal nutrition standards.
- Purchase only high-quality, safe food products.
- Operate under fiscally responsible practices while maintaining affordable prices.

We believe good nutrition supports academic success and a lifetime of healthy habits. Our schools encourage students to make smart food choices and recognize the link between healthy eating and their ability to learn and grow.

We also maintain a Wellness Committee, including staff, students, parents, administrators, community members, the school board, and the district nurse, which develops and maintains our [Wellness Policy](#). The policy is reviewed annually using the IDOE Triennial Assessment, and community involvement is welcomed. To participate, contact any school in the district.

Civil Rights

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.