**ANNUAL NEWS RELEASE - PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

New York State schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) will offer reimbursable meals to students at no cost. St. Francis High School participates in NSLP and/or SBP.

Free and Reduced Price meal applications may still be collected by your school to determine student eligibility based on the federal income eligibility criteria listed in the chart below.

**2026-2027 INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**
**FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS OR FREE MILK**

| **Free Eligibility Scale** | | | | | | **Reduced Price Eligibility Scale** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Free Lunch, Breakfast, Milk | | | | | | Reduced Price Lunch, Breakfast | | | | | |
| Household Size | Annual | Monthly | Twice per Month | Every Two Weeks | Weekly | Household Size | Annual | Monthly | Twice per Month | Every Two Weeks | Weekly |
| 1 | $ 20,748 | $ 1,729 | $ 865 | $ 798 | $ 399 | 1 | $ 29,526 | $ 2,461 | $ 1,231 | $ 1,136 | $ 568 |
| 2 | $ 28,132 | $ 2,345 | $ 1,173 | $ 1,082 | $ 541 | 2 | $ 40,034 | $ 3,337 | $ 1,669 | $ 1,540 | $ 770 |
| 3 | $ 35,516 | $ 2,960 | $ 1,480 | $ 1,366 | $ 683 | 3 | $ 50,542 | $ 4,212 | $ 2,106 | $ 1,944 | $ 972 |
| 4 | $ 42,900 | $ 3,575 | $ 1,788 | $ 1,650 | $ 825 | 4 | $ 61,050 | $ 5,088 | $ 2,544 | $ 2,349 | $ 1,175 |
| 5 | $ 50,284 | $ 4,191 | $ 2,096 | $ 1,934 | $ 967 | 5 | $ 71,558 | $ 5,964 | $ 2,982 | $ 2,753 | $ 1,377 |
| 6 | $ 57,668 | $ 4,806 | $ 2,403 | $ 2,218 | $ 1,109 | 6 | $ 82,066 | $ 6,839 | $ 3,420 | $ 3,157 | $ 1,579 |
| 7 | $ 65,052 | $ 5,421 | $ 2,711 | $ 2,502 | $ 1,251 | 7 | $ 92,574 | $ 7,715 | $ 3,858 | $ 3,561 | $ 1,781 |
| 8 | $ 72,436 | $ 6,037 | $ 3,019 | $ 2,786 | $ 1,393 | 8 | $ 103,082 | $ 8,591 | $ 4,296 | $ 3,965 | $ 1,983 |
| Each Add'l person, add | $ 7,384 | $ 616 | $ 308 | $ 284 | $ 142 | Each Add'l person, add | $ 10,508 | $ 876 | $ 438 | $ 405 | $ 203 |

**SNAP/TANF/FDPIR Households:** Households that currently include children who receive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) but who are not found during the Direct Certification Matching Process (DCMP), or households that currently receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) must complete an Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals/Milk, listing the child's name, a valid SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number and the signature of an adult household member. Eligibility for free eligibility benefits based on participation in SNAP, TANF or FDPIR is extended to all children in the household. When known to the School Food Authority, households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free benefits based on their participation in the SNAP, TANF or the FDPIR programs. No application is necessary if the household was notified by the SFA their children have been directly certified. If the household is not sure if their children have been directly certified, the household should contact the school.

**Other Source Categorical Eligibility:** When known to the School Food Authority, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free eligibility benefits based on the individual child's designation as Other Source Categorically Eligible, as defined by law. Children are determined Other Source Categorically Eligible if they are Homeless, Migrant, Runaway, a foster child, or Enrolled in Head Start or an eligible pre-kindergarten program.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free benefits. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free eligibility benefits regardless of income. A separate application for a foster child is no longer necessary. Foster children may also be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other children. Including children in foster care as household members may help other children in the household qualify for benefits. If non-foster children in a foster family are not eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits, an eligible foster child will still receive free benefits

If children or households receive benefits under Assistance Programs or Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs and are not listed on the notice of eligibility and are not notified by the School Food Authority of their free meal benefits, the parent or guardian should contact the school or should submit an income application.

**Other Households:** Households may complete the Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals/Milk sent home with the letter to parents. One application for all children in the household should be submitted. Additional copies are available at the principal's office in each school. **Applications may be submitted any time during the school year to Christine Zeisz. Please contact Christine Zeisz at (716) 627-2399 with any questions regarding the application process.**

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the School Food Authority if they choose to decline the free eligibility benefits. Households may apply for benefits at any time throughout the school year. Children of parents or guardians who become unemployed or experience a financial hardship mid-year may become eligible for free and reduced-price eligibility at any point during the school year.

Children in households receiving Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits may be eligible for free or reduced-price eligibility through the application process.

For up to 30 operating days into the new school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first) an individual child's free or reduced-price eligibility status from the previous year will continue within the same School Food Authority.

The information provided on the application will be confidential and will be used for determining eligibility. The names and eligibility status of participants may also be used for the allocation of funds to federal education programs such as Title I and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), State health or State education programs, provided the State agency or local education agency administers the programs, and for federal, State or local means-tested nutrition programs with eligibility standards comparable to the NSLP. Eligibility information may also be released to programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) or the Child Nutrition Act (CNA). The release of information to any program or entity not specifically authorized by the NSLA will require a written consent statement from the parent or guardian.

The School Food Authority does, however, have the right to verify at any time during the school year the information on the application.

Under the provisions of the policy, the designated official will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with the ruling of the designated official, he/she may make a request either orally or in writing for a hearing to appeal the decision**. Fr. Nicholas Rokitka, Business Manager** whose address is 4129 Lake Shore Rd. Hamburg, NY 14075 has been designated as the Hearing Official. Hearing procedures are outlined in the policy. However, prior to initiating the hearing procedure, the parent or School Food Authority may request a conference to provide an opportunity for the parent and official to discuss the situation, present information, and obtain an explanation of the data submitted in the application or the decisions rendered. The request for a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing.

Only complete applications can be approved. This includes complete and accurate information regarding: the SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR case number; the names of all household members; on an income application, the last four digits of the social security number of the person who signs the form or an indication that the adult does not have one, and the amount and source of income received by each household member. In addition, the parent or guardian must sign the application form, certifying the information is true and correct.

In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, disability or limited English proficiency.

**Nondiscrimination Statement:** This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.
In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
   U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
   (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
   program.intake@usda.gov

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