



Office of P-20 Education Policy
Child Nutrition Program Administration
89 Washington Avenue, Room 375 EBA, Albany, NY 12234
(518) 473-8781 Fax (518) 473-0018
www.nysed.gov/cn/cnms.htm

Greater Johnstown School District Letter to Parents for School Meal Programs Special Provision Options (Provision 2 Non-Base Year & Community Eligibility Provision)

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We are pleased to inform you that the Greater Johnstown School District has implemented a meal certification option to our schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program called the **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**. **All students enrolled at Greater Johnstown SD are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at no charge** to your household each day of the 2023-24 school year. Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or complete a Free or Reduced Meal Application.

What does this mean for your child(ren) attending the school(s) identified above?

All students enrolled at Greater Johnstown SD are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at **no charge** to your household each day of the 2023 - 2024 school year. Please complete the Household Income Eligibility Form securely, online at the link below:

<https://linqconnect.com/public/income-form/new?identifier=NULH2U>

What is the Household Income Eligibility Form?

The form collects basic information about your learner so our school can determine if they would otherwise be eligible for free or reduced-price breakfast/lunch. It is important for EVERY family to fill out this form because doing so helps bring much-needed additional money and services directly to our school! This form must be submitted each year **by October 1st**. The easiest, most secure way to submit it is to complete it online at <https://linqconnect.com/public/income-form/new?identifier=NULH2U>. The form is available at each school building if you do not have access to it online. Only if necessary, paper forms can be completed and returned to school with your student to the attention: Erika Winney, School Lunch Director. Please call Jennifer Radigan, Shared Food Service Specialist at 518-464-5106 or email jennifer.radigan@neric.org, if you have any questions.

If all meals are free, why do we have to complete this form?

School districts receive funding from the state and federal governments. For each learner who would otherwise qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast/lunch, schools receives additional dollars in funding. Even a small increase in completed Household Income Eligibility forms collected results in significantly more money to support our learners and schools.

What if my child doesn't want to eat school breakfast/lunch? Why should I fill out the form?

Even if your child chooses to bring their own breakfast/lunch or snack or if they eat lunch at home, filling out the form is very important! It ensures that our school gets all of the funding and benefits available. Also, even if your child does not eat school breakfast/lunch, learners who would otherwise qualify for free breakfast/lunch can receive benefits, including reduced fees for SAT and ACT tests, reduced college applications fees, discounts on Chromebook Warranty, and discounts on monthly internet services and computer purchases.

How does filling out the Household Income Eligibility Form help our school?

Schools qualify to receive more money per learner from the state and federal government and receive more money in their budgets to support learners.

Our Household doesn't qualify for free or reduced-price meals, do I still need to complete the form?

The information on this form is not shared. If you complete the secure online form, you won't enter the exact household income, only an income range. If you do not wish to be considered for eligibility, you may fill out the paper form by completing the learner information, write "does not qualify" in the income section, and then complete the name, signature, and date lines, and return it to jennifer.radigan@neric.org or to your child's school.

Is the information I submit confidential?

Yes. The information you submit on the Household Income Eligibility Form is not shared by our school. Personal information submitted on the form is not shared with the state or federal government; only the number of learners who would otherwise qualify for free or reduced breakfast/lunch is shared. District personnel are not told which learners would qualify for free or reduced breakfast/lunch benefits. Our school does not share information with other organizations that provide benefits.

What if I still have questions?

We are happy to hear from you if you still have questions. Please contact School Lunch Director, Erika Winney at (518) 762-1875 or email ewinney@johnstownschoools.org. You can also contact Shared Food Service Specialist Jennifer Radigan at 518-464-5106 or email jennifer.radigan@neric.org. We thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Erika Winney
School Lunch Director

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-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.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.

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