



Hickory Public Schools

432 Fourth Avenue SW, Hickory, North Carolina 28602

Phone: (828) 322-2855 • Fax: (828) 322-1834 • www.hickoryschools.net

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Hickory Public Schools** offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs **\$1.25**; lunch costs **\$2.00 for grades PK – 5 and \$2.25 grades 6 - 12**. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is **\$.30** for breakfast and **\$.40** for lunch.

- 1. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. Complete one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: your child's school or to Mary West at Hickory Public Schools, 432 4th Ave SW, Hickory, NC 28602 or phone 828-322-2855.
- 2. WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS?** All children in households receiving benefits from **Food and Nutrition Services, formerly known as The Food Stamp Program, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations or TANF/Work First**. Also, your children can get free meals if your household's gross income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Guidelines.
- 3. CAN FOSTER CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Yes, foster children that are the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income.
- 4. CAN HOMELESS, RUNAWAY, AND MIGRANT CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Yes, children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway or migrant qualify for free meals. Please call Angela Simmons, homeless liaison/migrant coordinator at 828-322-2855.
- 5. WHO CAN GET REDUCED PRICE MEALS?** Your children can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Eligibility Income Chart, shown on this application.
- 6. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call the Child Nutrition Office at 828-322-2855 if you have questions.
- 7. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless Child Nutrition sent you a letter before school started that says your child/ren are eligible to re receive free meals.
- 8. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.
- 9. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?** Yes and we may also ask you to send written proof.
- 10. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER?** Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year.
- 11. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION?** First, call Child Nutrition at 828-322-2855 to verify information on the application form. Second, you may request a hearing by writing to: Dr. James Causby, Interim Superintendent, Hickory Public Schools, 432 4th Ave SW, Hickory, NC 28602.
- 12. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN?** Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
- 13. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD?** You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends) who share income and expenses. You must include yourself and all children living with you including foster children.
- 14. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?** List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
- 15. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE INCLUDE OUR HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS INCOME?** If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
- 16. MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS HER COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME?** No, if the combat pay is received in addition to her/his basic pay because of her/his deployment and it wasn't received before she/he was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact Child Nutrition at 828-322-2855 for more information.
- 17. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR?** To find out how to apply for **Food and Nutrition Services, Formerly known as The Food Stamp Program** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call **The Careline phone number (1-800-662-7030)**.

If you have other questions or need help, call **828-322-2855** and ask for the **Child Nutrition Department**.

Sincerely, **Mary West**