

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Walnut Valley Unified School District participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Meals are served every school day at participating schools. Please note that children may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals.

### 1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS?

All children in households receiving benefits from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are eligible for free meals.

- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in the Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if the household's income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on the chart below.

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

Do the members of the household lack a permanent address? Are they staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does the household family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living in the household who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If children in the household meet these criteria please call or e-mail Martha Arellano – Child Welfare/Homeless Liaison, [marellano@wvusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:marellano@wvusd.k12.ca.us) or 909-444-4383 or Brandon Dade – Migrant Coordinator, [bdade@wvusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:bdade@wvusd.k12.ca.us) or 909-595-1261 x43413.

### 3. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?

No. Only one meal benefit application per household is required. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information.

### 4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?

No. Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. If any child(ren) in the household are not listed in the eligibility notification letter please contact the individual listed below. Evelyn Lovato, [elovato@wvusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:elovato@wvusd.k12.ca.us) or 909-595-12614 x31322.

### 5. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE?

Yes. The meal benefit application is only good for one school year. A completed meal application for the new school year must be completed prior to the start of school to avoid any meal charges.

### 6. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS IF I RECEIVE WIC?

A meal benefit application must be submitted in order to determine eligibility.

### 7. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?

Yes. The information provided is reviewed. Documentation of household income may be requested

during the verification process or at any time as necessary.

8. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER IN THE SAME SCHOOL YEAR?

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 for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit or if there's an increase in household size.

9. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION?

Please contact the Hearing Official: Brandon Dade – [bdade@wvusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:bdade@wvusd.k12.ca.us) or 909-595-1261 x43413 WVUSD 880 S. Lemon Ave. Walnut, CA 91789

10. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN?

Yes. Household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price meals.

11. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?

List the amount that is normally received. 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.

12. 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 zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

13. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY IF WE ARE IN THE MILITARY?

Basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. Cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, or Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments are received, it must be included as income. If housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.

For more information or questions please visit our website: [www.walnutnutrition.org](http://www.walnutnutrition.org) or email [Nutrition@wvusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:Nutrition@wvusd.k12.ca.us).