



Texarkana
Independent School District

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**TISD CHILD NUTRITION ANNOUNCES POLICIES FOR
FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS & COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROGRAM
FOR TEXARKANA ISD, BLOOMBURG ISD, DEKALB ISD,
LINDEN-KILDARE CISD, MALTA ISD, McLEOD ISD,
REDWATER ISD AND NEW BOSTON ISD**

Texarkana, TX – Texarkana Independent School District Child Nutrition Department announced its policy today for providing free and reduced-price meals for students served under the attached current income eligibility guidelines. Each school/site or the central office for each district served under the TISD Child Nutrition Department has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by anyone upon request.

As of August 1, school districts began distributing letters (in English and Spanish) to households of children in the school districts served by the TISD Child Nutrition Department regarding eligibility benefits and any actions households need to take to apply for these benefits. Applications are also available from the TISD Child Nutrition Department, 1600 Waterall, Texarkana, TX 75503.

Criteria for Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits

The following criteria will be used to determine a child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meal benefits:

Income

1. Household income that is at or below the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines;

Categorical or Automatic Eligibility

2. Household receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR);

Program Participant

3. Student's status as a foster child, homeless, runaway, migrant, or displaced by a declared disaster;
4. Student's enrollment in Head Start or Even Start.

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Income Eligibility

For those households that qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on income, an adult in the household must fill out a free and reduced-price meal application and return it to their campus office or to Beth Carson, Director of Child Nutrition, 1600 Waterall, Texarkana, Texas 75501. Those individuals filling out the application will need to provide the following information:

1. Name of all household members;
2. Amount, frequency, and source of current income for each household member;
3. Last 4 digits of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application or, if the adult does not have a social security number, check the box for "No Social Security number." A social security number is not required to apply for these programs;
4. Signature of an adult household member attesting that the information provided is correct.

Categorical or Program Eligibility

TISD is working with local agencies to identify all students who are categorically and program eligible and will notify the households of these students that they do not need to complete an application. Any household that does not receive a letter and feels it should have, contact Beth Carson, Director of Child Nutrition, 903.792.2231 ext. 1.

Any household that wishes to decline benefits should contact Beth Carson, Director of Child Nutrition, 903.792.2231 ext. 1.

Applications may be submitted anytime during the school year. The information households provide on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility. Applications may also be verified by the school officials at any time during the school year.

Determining Eligibility

Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price meal policy, Elaine Hicks, Student Nutrition Specialist, will review applications and determine eligibility. Households or guardians dissatisfied with the Reviewing Official's eligibility determination may wish to discuss the decision with the Reviewing Official on an informal basis. Households wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either orally or in writing to Jo Ann Rice, Assistant Superintendent of Student & Community Development, 4241 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas 75503, 903.794.3651 ext. 1011.

Unexpected Circumstances

If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact their child's school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for benefits if the household's income falls at or below the attached current income eligibility guidelines.

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The TISD Child Nutrition Department will also continue its policy to operate the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program for the 2017-18 school year at: Paul Laurence Dunbar Early

Education Center, Highland Park Elementary, Nash Elementary, Spring Lake Park Elementary, Theron Jones Early Literacy Center, Wake Village Elementary and Westlawn Elementary at TISD; Crestview Elementary and Oakview Primary in New Boston ISD; and, Linden Elementary in Linden-Kildare CISD. Schools qualifying to operate CEP serve breakfast and lunch to all children at no charge and eliminate the collection of meal applications for free, reduced-price, and paid student meals. This new approach reduces burdens for both families and school administrators and helps ensure that students receive nutritious meals.

Schools that will begin the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) for the first year in 2017-18 are: Texas Middle School in TISD; New Boston Middle School in New Boston ISD; Mae Luster Stephens Junior High School and Linden-Kildare High School in Linden-Kildare CISD; DeKalb Elementary, DeKalb Middle School and DeKalb High School in DeKalb ISD; and, Bloomburg Elementary, Bloomburg High School in Bloomburg ISD.

For additional information, please contact: Beth Carson, Director of Child Nutrition, 1600 Waterall, Texarkana, Texas 75503, 903.792.2231 ext. 1 or beth.carson@txkisd.net.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, 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, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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