



## NUTRITION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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**Dear Parent/Guardian:**

**2021-2022 Program Information**

**The USDA has decided all students will have access to free school breakfast and lunch again this school year. However, it is imperative to still fill out a free and reduced meals application. In the event P-EBT benefits are issued again this school year, you will only qualify if you have a current year approved application on file.**

### **FREE AND REDUCED PRICE BREAKFAST & LUNCH INFORMATION**

Paper applications are available at your student's school or online at [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org), →Departments→ Nutrition Services. You only need to complete one application for your entire family. Make sure all of your students are listed on the application along with their grade and the school they will attend. Completed paper applications may be returned to the school office, the lunch room cashier or mailed directly to the STCS Nutrition Services Office at P.O. Box 6278, Saginaw, MI 48608. Please make sure the application is filled out completely. Applications missing information or not signed will be returned. Your application will be processed within 2 weeks of the time the application is received in the Nutrition Services Office. Once your application has been processed, you will receive a letter letting you know if your application is approved free, reduced price or denied with the reason for denial. Unless your child was free or reduced in this district last year, please make sure you send money or a sack lunch to school until you receive notice of approval. Students are expected to pay full price until the application has been processed and you have been notified. If your child received free or reduced price meal benefits at the end of last school year in this district, those benefits will continue for the first few weeks of the new school year. **However, a new application must be submitted and approved by Friday, October 1, 2021 or your student's benefits from last school year will expire.**

**PLEASE APPLY!** Your student's eligibility for free or reduced price meals also provides the District with much needed funding for instructional and pupil support services. If you are not sure whether your children qualify or you're not sure your children will use the meal program, please apply for free or reduced price meals anyway. Your information is completely confidential and will not be shared without your permission. Every student's eligibility equates to additional funding for the District! In addition, if P-EBT benefits are offered again, you will not qualify unless you have a current year approved application on file.

### **SCHOOL MEAL PRICES**

Breakfast and lunch will be offered to all students free of charge this year. However, the cost for milk if a child brings a cold lunch is .60 per 8-ounce unit. There will be options for additional food purchases of a la carte items at the Middle and High School levels. So a "complete school lunch" will be offered for free, but a student may choose to purchase other items instead of the lunch or to supplement the lunch.

### **EAT BREAKFAST AT SCHOOL!**

Mornings can be really crazy...the alarm doesn't go off...the kids don't want to get up...there's no time to eat breakfast before the bus comes...or they're just not ready to eat. Eat breakfast at school! School breakfast will give your child a healthy start to the day. A nutritious breakfast helps students be more alert so they can learn more in class. Breakfast has vitamins and nutrients for a strong and healthy body. Help your child start the day right with school breakfast!

### **POINT OF SALE SYSTEM INFORMATION**

The Nutrition Services Department manages student meal accounts with a debit point of sale system. A debit system requires there to be money on their account in order to use their "debit" card. ALL students use a student ID card or enter their ID number on a PIN pad to access their meal account. A child's free or reduced price meal status is embedded in the system and is kept **completely confidential**. You can deposit money in your student's account online with a credit or debit card (a \$2.00 convenience fee is charged) at [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org), or by sending cash or a check to school with your student or taking the payment directly to the lunch room cashier in your student's school. The money may be used to purchase milk or, at the middle or high schools, ala carte items. A student must have money in his or her account to make a purchase. If you do not want your child to purchase ala carte items, contact the Nutrition Services Office to have the account flagged. Any balance (positive or negative) remaining at the end of the school year automatically carries over to the next year. **On-line access to your student's account is available by completing the On-line Access Request Form on the Nutrition Services link on the STCS website: [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org).**

**SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION**

## **CHECK WRITING POLICY**

Online deposits are encouraged. Checks are accepted and should be made payable to **STCS Nutrition Services**. Please write your student's name and/or ID number on the check. The Nutrition Services Department has a minimum check policy. Please do not send checks for less than \$5.00. In the event a check you write to the Nutrition Services Department is returned from the bank for “**non-sufficient funds**” (NSF), a **\$20.00 fee will be assessed**. You will lose the privilege of writing checks to the Nutrition Services Department until the NSF check and the \$20.00 fee are paid. No checks, regardless of the account or check writer, will be accepted for any child in the family until the outstanding NSF check and fee are paid. After two (2) instances of returned NSF checks, checks will no longer be accepted for your student's meal account(s). Outstanding NSF checks will be sent to collections.

## **SCHOOL MEAL CHARGE POLICY:**

All students are offered a free breakfast and lunch this year. However, we do not allow students to “charge” a la carte items to their account. A la carte items are not part of the State approved meal, and are considered additional purchases. See the “**School Meal Charge Policy**” document on the Nutrition Services web page at [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org), for further details.

## **SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

If your child has a special dietary need determined by a licensed physician, we will do our best to make reasonable accommodations. Please contact the Nutrition Services Office and ask to speak to me directly. We will discuss your child's individual needs and make the necessary arrangements. The State of Michigan does require a signed form from your child's physician stating the special dietary need and the prescribed diet and/or substitution. This form can be found on the STCS website at [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org) → Departments → Nutrition Services, and must be on file in the Nutrition Services Office prior to making any meal substitutions.

## **MENUS**

Monthly breakfast and lunch menus are available in your school office or on the STCS website at [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org) → Departments → Nutrition Services.

## **QUESTIONS AND ASSISTANCE**

If you have questions, concerns or require assistance, we can be reached at (989) 793-9713 or e-mailed at: [nsoffice@stcs.org](mailto:nsoffice@stcs.org). You may also speak with the Nutrition Services staff in your child's school.

We are very proud of the service provided by our department. We offer healthy food choices that meet the USDA's nutritional guidelines for school meals while still making the meals appealing to our students. We offer reduced or low fat protein selections, 1% white milk and chocolate flavored milk. A variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grain items are served every day. All ala carte and snack items sold to students during the school day meet the USDA “Smart Snacks” guidelines. We are always looking for ways to improve our program, make the meal choices more appealing to students and maintain financial stability. If you have ideas, suggestions, questions or concerns please let us know. We look forward to serving your children during the 2021-22 school year.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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 Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. 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](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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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