

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- [How do I qualify for the Free and Reduced program?](#)
- [Do I have to fill out a Free/Reduced Meal Application for my child every year?](#)
- [When can I get a new application to fill out for my student\(s\)?](#)
- [If my student is withdrawn from school and returns at a later date, do I have to fill out another application?](#)
- [Can transfer students use the same application from another school district?](#)

School Meals

- [What are the current prices for lunch and breakfast?](#)
- [What classifies a meal as reimbursable by the government?](#)
- [What is "offer versus serve"?](#)
- [Can a student substitute juice for milk?](#)
- [Are schools required to provide meals to students without money?](#)
- [What is the meal charging procedure for Dickinson Independent School District?](#)
- [Why is my student's meal more expensive when fewer items are purchased?](#)
- [Why did my student get this 'Reminder Notice' to bring home and/or phone call to home by School Messenger?](#)
- [Can school staff and/or parents require students to take certain menu items?](#)
- [Can students be denied food as a disciplinary action?](#)
- [If a class is being given a special meal, can the sponsoring group pay for the free students and tell the other students to bring money?](#)
- [Why must meals served on school-sponsored field trips be monitored?](#)
- [What is the district's policy on food brought from home?](#)
- [Why do faculty, staff and non-enrolled visitors pay more for meals than students?](#)
- [Can district staff and/or parents purchase or take leftover food home?](#)

Student Meal Accounts

- [How can I make deposits to my student's meal account?](#)
- [What happens if someone uses my student's meal account?](#)
- [Can I limit what my student purchases from his/her meal account?](#)
- [What happens to money left in my student's meal account at the end of the school year?](#)
- [How do I get a refund of money in my student's meal account?](#)
- [Will my student have the same ID while enrolled in DISD?](#)

Nutrition/Wellness

- [What is the Dickinson ISD Wellness program?](#)

Free/Reduced Meal Applications

How do I qualify for the Free and Reduced program?

Students whose family income is at or below 130 percent of the poverty income guidelines are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 and 185 percent are eligible for reduced price meals.

[Back to top](#)

Do I have to fill out a Free/Reduced Meal Application for my student every year?

YES. You must fill out a new Free/Reduced Meal Application every school year and include all students on one household application. If your student received meal benefits at the end of the previous school year the benefits will carry over for the first 30 operating days of the new school year, or until a current application is completed and on file. Online meal applications are available at www.dickinsonisd.org and paper applications are available by request. Online meal applications have quicker processing. Until a current application is processed, the student must either bring money to purchase a school meal or bring a meal from home. All charges must be paid that were accrued prior to the household being approved for meal benefits.

EXCEPTION: If you receive a letter stating that your student(s) have been Direct Certified (DC), then you **do not have to complete** a new application.

What is Direct Certified (DC)?

DC students are students who are certified by the state of Texas and meet the requirement for low income.

[Back to top](#)

When can I get a new application to fill out for my student(s)?

Applications for free and reduced price meals are available online through the Meal App Now link provided under "Quicklinks" on the bottom left side of the homepage at www.dickinsonisd.org. Online applications can be completed very easily using any computer or smartphone with internet access. Public computers are available for use at the Food and Nutrition Services building, all campuses, and the ESC building. Paper applications are available upon request.

Please fill out only one (1) application per household. Applications can also be completed during online registration. Applications are accepted throughout the school year. If you have a change in income or household size please call 281-229-6184.

[Back to top](#)

If my child is withdrawn from school and returns at a later date, do I have to fill out another application?

NO. If your child is approved for free/reduced meals, it is good for the entire school year.

[Back to top](#)

Can transfer students use the same application from another school district?

NO. USDA requires that a new application be completed when a student moves into a new district. Please complete only one (1) application per household per school year.

[Back to top](#)

School Meals

What are the current prices for lunch and breakfast?

Elementary Schools (PK-4th grade):

Breakfast \$1.00

Lunch \$1.40

Middle School and Junior High (5th-8th grade):

Breakfast \$1.25

Lunch \$2.00

High School (9th-12th grade):

Breakfast \$1.25

Lunch \$2.25

Reduced Price Meals:

Breakfast \$0.30

Lunch \$0.40

[Back to top](#)

What classifies a meal as reimbursable by the government?

The goal for the reimbursable meals program is to encourage your child to eat nutritious, well rounded meals.

A child must select a minimum of three items at breakfast, including a 1/2 cup of fruit. At lunch, a student must select 3 food groups, including 1/2 cup fruit or vegetable serving.

[Back to top](#)

What is “offer versus serve”?

The student is “offered” all of the menu requirements, but the student chooses what he/she is “served” as long as a sufficient number (determined by USDA) of menu items or components are taken. This regulation was designed to reduce food waste.

[Back to top](#)

Can a student substitute juice for milk?

NO. Per USDA, milk is considered one of the food groups for a reimbursable meal. The student may wish to purchase juice if available. Water is available in all cafeterias.

[Back to top](#)

Are schools required to provide meals to students without money?

NO. If there is a financial need, parents are encouraged to complete an application to determine eligibility for free or reduced-priced meals. The Food and Nutrition Department may offer complimentary foods to any student who does not have money or whose application has not yet been processed.

[Back to top](#)

What is the meal charging procedure for the Dickinson Independent School District?

[Click here for the District Charge Procedure.](#)

[Back to top](#)

Why is my student's meal more expensive when fewer items are purchased?

If a student chooses not to select the appropriate food items/components for a reimbursable meal, they will be charged a la carte prices. A la carte items are not reimbursable.

[Back to top](#)

Why did I get a call that my student has charged a meal at school?

Dickinson ISD's Food and Nutrition Department provides a 'call-out service' to parents/guardians when a school meal is charged. This is intended to be a reminder to parents that it is time to place additional monies into the student's meal account. We believe the courtesy call is a convenient notice to the parent/guardian.

You may also set up e-mail alerts and/or text message alerts that will notify you about your student's low meal balance by logging onto dickinsonisd.org and clicking on the [Lunch Money Now link](#).

[Back to top](#)

Can school staff and/or parents require students to take certain menu items?

NO. Per USDA, staff members and other adults are prohibited from telling the student what menu items to take (including milk or entrée). They can inform the student of other possible meal components they need to complete a reimbursable tray. It must be the student's choice. Additionally, USDA requires that only the student(not staff, parents or siblings) eat food on their trays.

[Back to top](#)

Can students be denied food as a disciplinary action?

NO. USDA policy prohibits the denial of meals as a disciplinary action against any student who is enrolled in a school participating in the Federal Meals Program.

[Back to top](#)

If a class is being given a special meal, can the sponsoring group pay for the free students and tell the other students to bring money?

NO. This procedure would overtly identify a student's meal eligibility status. All students must be treated the same.

[Back to top](#)

Why must meals served on school-sponsored field trips be monitored?

USDA requires that all meals claimed for reimbursement meet all regulations, even if on a field trip. Reimbursement is claimed for a specific meal served to a specific student. That is why we cannot just send "25 lunches for 25 students". Additionally, the teacher must insure that these meals be kept sanitary and at the correct temperature.

[Back to top](#)

What is the district's policy on food brought from home?

The only food to be consumed by students during the school day on school premises shall be that provided by the school district's food and nutrition department, prepared under the supervision of the appropriate school personnel, prepared and supplied by the teacher for instructional purposes, or food brought to the school by the students for their own consumption. With the joint approval of the campus principal and the director of the Food and Nutrition Services Department, food for special student activities during the school day may be provided.

[Back to top](#)

Why do faculty, staff and non-enrolled visitors pay more for meals than students?

According to federal regulations "breakfasts and lunches served to teachers, administrators, custodians and other adults must be priced so that the adult payment in combination with any other revenue is sufficient to cover the overall cost of the lunch, including the value of any USDA entitlement and bonus donated foods used to prepare the meal." The Food and Nutrition Department receives reimbursement for meals served to children. The value of this reimbursement and donated commodities must not be used to subsidize adult meals.

[Back to top](#)

Can district staff and/or parents purchase or take leftover food home?

NO. The breakfast and lunch programs are designed and funded to serve children in a designated location, usually the cafeteria. No food, not even purchased food, is to be taken from the premises.

[Back to top](#)

Student Meal Account

How can I make deposits to my student's meal account?

The preferred way to make deposits is online using the Lunch Money Now link that is located on the district's website at www.dickinsonisd.org. Prepaying for meals and/or a la carte items is an efficient way to pay for your student's school meals. If paying by check, write the student name(s) and ID # on the "memo" section of the check. If paying by cash, enclose a piece of paper with the student name(s) and ID # with the money in an envelope. Deposits on an account can be made at any time either before school or during lunch, but to help serve you better, we would encourage you to make deposits in the morning. Any amount may be deposited on any day. The cashier will remind the student when his/her account balance is getting low. See the "Food and Nutrition Charge Procedure" on the district's website.

REMINDER - Food and Nutrition Services does not accept checks three weeks before school is out each year.

If you have questions, please contact Food and Nutrition Services at 281-229-6012.

[Back to top](#)

What happens if someone uses my student's meal account?

The District student accounting system randomly generates the ID numbers that are distributed to your student, making it difficult for someone to gain access to the number.

If the number is used by someone other than the legitimate holder, the register will notify the cashier that the number has been used. The cafeteria manager will take steps to rectify this situation. Your student's meal account will not be charged for unauthorized usage.

A parent can ask for a detailed report on available meal money and meal transactions in the student's account. To request this information, please call or email the cafeteria manager. You may also check your student's meal account balance and/or meal transactions online at: www.dickinsonisd.org under the [Lunch Money Now](#) link. You may also set up 'low balance' reminder notifications via this link.

Please remember that the student meal ID number issued belongs to your son or daughter. This meal ID number is confidential and should not be shared with other students. When your student keys in his/her ID number, your student's name will also appear on the screen. It would be helpful if you would discuss with your student that their ID number needs to be kept confidential.

[Back to top](#)

Can I limit what my student purchases from his/her account?

Your student's meal account can be blocked from a la carte purchases at the parent's/guardian's request. A message can be put on a student's meal account with any restrictions the parent/guardian requests. The "message" will remain in effect as long as your student attends school in the district unless a parent requests it be removed.

[Back to top](#)

What happens to money left in my student's meal account at the end of the school year?

If your student has money left in his/her account at the end of a school year, the money will remain in the student's meal account. This is true whether the student remains in the same school or moves to another Dickinson ISD school. All students leaving the district must check with the Food and Nutrition Department to pay any outstanding charges.

How do I get a refund of money in my student's meal account?

If you would like a refund of money in your student's meal account, you must contact the cafeteria manager at your student's school or the FNS Office to fill out a request for a refund. Refunds will be sent only to the legal guardian at their address. Cash refunds of \$10.00 or less are permitted at the school and all refunds greater than \$10.00 are handled through the Food and Nutrition Services office. [Click here to print a Request for Refund Form.](#)

Requests can be mailed to:

Dickinson Food and Nutrition Services

Dickinson ISD

Attn: Refunds

P.O. Drawer Z, Dickinson, Texas 77539

Requests may also be faxed to 281-229-6013 or emailed to cvincent@dickinsonisd.org

[Back to top](#)

Will my child have the same student ID number while enrolled in DISD?

Yes. Personal Identification numbers are issued by the district. The ID number your student is issued upon enrolling in the district will be valid while attending any school in the district for the duration of their time in the district.

[Back to top](#)

What is the Dickinson ISD Wellness program?

In Dickinson ISD we are committed to providing means for better health, and overall Wellness of Dickinson ISD employees. On our Wellness Web Page you will find helpful articles for weight loss tips, workout tips, and other useful links that will help promote healthy living and a healthy lifestyle. If you have any questions please call Lacy Willey, lwilley@dickinsonisd.org for more information about healthy activities going on.

[Back to top](#)