FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Brookings School District offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs \$1.60; lunch costs \$2.55 for K-5, and \$2.80 for 6-12. **Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.** Reduced price is \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch. This packet includes an application for free or reduced price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

- 1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?
 - All children in households receiving benefits from SNAP, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or 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 their school's 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 your 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 this chart.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2015-2016						
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly			
1	21.775	1.815	419			
2	29,471	2,456	419			
3	37,167	3,098	715			
4	44,863	3,739	863			
5	52,559	4,380	1,011			
6	60,255	5,022	1,159			
7	67,951	5,663	1,307			
8	75,647	6,304	1,455			
Each additional person:	7,696	642	148			

- 2. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY? Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call 605-696-4713.
- DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Use 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: Laura Duba, 2130 8th St S, Brookings, SD 57006.
- 4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS? No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Laura Duba at 605-696-4713 right away so those children get benefits, too.
- 5. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW 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 the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year.
- 6. I GET WIC OR MEDICAID. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC or MedicAid <u>may</u> be eligible for free milk. Please send in an application.

- 7. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
- 8. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? 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.
- 9. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials by calling Laura Duba at 605-696-4713. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Brian Lueders at 2130 8th St S, Brookings, SD 57006 or calling 605-696-4700.
- 10. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other 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 you <u>normally</u> 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.
- 12. WHAT IF MY INCOME CHANGES DURING THE YEAR OR MY SNAP, TANF, OR FDPIR BENEFITS CHANGE? If your application for free or reduced price benefits was properly approved, you will remain eligible for those benefits for an allotted time period. You may visit with a school/center official to get the exact date the meal benefits will expire.
- 13. 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.
- 14. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, or receive Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.
 - IS COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME? No, if the combat pay is received in addition to the basic pay because of deployment and it was not received before deployment, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your school for more information.
- 15. WILL YOU TELL ANYONE ELSE ABOUT THE INFORMATION ON MY FORM? We will use the information on your form to decide if your children should get free or reduced price meals. We may inform officials associated with other child nutrition, health, and education programs of the information on your form to determine benefits for those programs or for funding and/or evaluation purposes
- 16. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application.
- 17. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? Contact your local Department of Social Services office to find out how to apply for SNAP or other assistance benefits.
- 18. WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS SPECIAL FOODS? The school/center will make substitutions to the regular school meal for children whose disability restricts their diet when a physician certifies that disability. If the parent requests, the staff <u>may</u> choose to make substitutions for individual children who do not have a disability, but who cannot drink regular milk due to medical or other special dietary needs that are supported by a certified medical authority. These requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please call the school/center food service department for further information to request the special meals or milk.

If you have other questions or need help, call 605-696-4713

HOW TO APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the application for free or reduced price school meals. You only need to submit **one** application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in [School Food Authority]. The application must be filled out completely to certify your children for free or reduced price school meals.

Please follow these instructions in order! Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on your application. If at any time you are not sure what to do next, please contact Laura Duba at 605-696-4713.

PLEASE USE A PEN (NOT A PENCIL) WHEN FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION AND DO YOUR BEST TO PRINT CLEARLY.

STEP 1: LIST ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WHO ARE INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND STUDENTS UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE 12

Tell us how many infants, children, and school students live in your household. They do NOT have to be related to you to be a part of your household.

Who should I list here?

When filling out this section, please include all members in your household who are:

- Children age 18 or under **and** are supported with the household's income;
- In your care under a foster arrangement, or qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway youth;
- Students attending Brookings School District, regardless of age.
- A) List each child's name. For each child, print their first name, middle initial and last name. Use one line of the application for each child. If there are more children present than lines on the application, attach a second piece of paper with all required information for the additional children.
- B) How old is the child, Is the child a student? and What school/center does the child attend? Fill in the information for the center or school to use.
- C) Do you have any foster children? If any children listed are foster children, mark the "Foster Child" box next to the child's name. Foster children who live with you may count as members of your household and should be listed on your application. If you are *only* applying for foster children, after completing STEP 1, skip to STEP 4 of the application and these instructions.
- **D)** Are any children homeless, migrant, or runaway? If you believe any child listed in this section may meet this description, please mark the "Homeless, Migrant, Runaway" box next to the child's name and **complete all steps of the application.**

STEP 2: DO ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (INCLUDING YOU) CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: SNAP, TANF, OR FDPIR?

If anyone in your household participates in the assistance programs listed below, your children are eligible for free school meals:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

A) IF NO ONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:

- Circle 'NO' and skip to STEP 3 and then 4 on these instructions and STEP 3 and then 4 on your application.
- Leave STEP 2 blank.

B) IF ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:

- Circle 'YES' and provide a case number for SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. You only need to write one case number. If you participate in one of these programs and do not know your case number, contact your local assistance office. You must provide a case number on your application if you circled "YES".
- Skip to STEP 4.

STEP 3: REPORT INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

A) Report all income earned by children. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Children" in these instructions and report the combined gross income for ALL children listed in Step 1 in your household in the box marked "Total Child Income." Two sets of boxes are provided in case there are different frequencies for income. Only count foster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household. It is optional for the household to list foster children living with them as part of the household.

What is Child Income?

Child income is money received from outside your household that is paid **directly** to your children. Many households do not have any child income. Use the chart below to determine if your household has child income to report.

Sources of Income for Children				
Sources of Child Income	Example(s)			
Earnings from work	 A child has a job where they earn a salary or wages. 			
 Social Security Disability Payments Survivor's Benefits 	 A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits. A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives social security benefits. 			
Income from persons <i>outside</i> the household	A friend or extended family member <i>regularly</i> gives a child spending money.			
Income from any other source	A child receives income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust.			

FOR EACH ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBER:

Who should I list here?

When filling out this section, please include all members in your household who are:

• Living with you and share income and expenses, even if not related and even if they do not receive income of their own.

Do not include people who:

- Live with you but are not supported by your household's income and do not contribute income to your household.
- Children and students already listed in Step 1

How do I fill in the income amount and source? FOR EACH TYPE OF INCOME:

- Use the charts in this section to determine if your household has income to report.
- Report all amounts in gross income ONLY. Report all income in whole dollars. Do not include cents.
 - o Gross income is the total income received before taxes or deductions.
 - Many people think of income as the amount they "take home" and not the total, "gross" amount. Make sure that the income you report on this application has NOT been reduced to pay for taxes, insurance premiums, or any other amounts taken from your pay.
- Write a "0" in any fields where there is no income to report. Any income fields left empty or blank will
 be counted as zeroes. If you write '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that
 there is no income to report. If local officials have known or available information that your household
 income was reported incorrectly, your application will be verified for cause.
- Mark how often each type of income is received using the check boxes to the right of each field.
- The last set of columns includes space for annual income such as farming.
- B) List Adult Household member's name. Print the name of each household member in the boxes marked "Names of Adult Household Members (First and Last)." Do not list any household members you listed in STEP 1. If a child listed in STEP 1 has income, follow the instructions in STEP 3, part A.

C) Report earnings from work. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income from work in the "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the money received from working at jobs. If you are a self-employed business or farm owner, you will report your net income.

What if I am self-employed?

If you are self-employed, report income from that work as a **net** amount. This is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts or revenue.

To figure monthly income for farm/self-employed: The information to figure income from private business operation is to be taken from your U.S. Individual Income Tax Return – Form 1040. Write the numbers from the corresponding tax form lines in the spaces below. Write it on the application in the earnings column as yearly. If it is a negative number, write it as zero on the application. All other income on lines 7 through 22 of the tax form must be listed separately for the person who earned it. Net loss carryover cannot be used to decrease the household income.

Proprietorship Income	Farm Income	Partnership Income
Line 12 \$	Line 13 \$	Line 13 \$
Line 13 \$	Line 14 \$	Line 14 \$
Line 14 \$	Line 17 \$	Line 17 \$
TOTAL \$	Line 18 \$	TOTAL \$
	TOTAL \$	

- **D)** Report income from Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony" field on the application. Do not report the value of any cash value public assistance benefits NOT listed on the chart. If income is received from child support or alimony, only **court-ordered** payments should be reported here. Informal but regular payments should be reported as "other" income in the next part.
- **E)** Report income from Farming/Pensions/Retirement/All other income. Farming is included here because this chart has a box for annual income. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income that applies in the "Farming/Pensions/Retirement/All Other Income" field on the application.
- **F)** Report total household size. Enter the total number of household members in the field "Total Household Members (Children and Adults)." This number **MUST** be equal to the number of household members listed in STEP 1 and STEP 3. If there are any members of your household that you have not listed on the application, go back and add them. It is very important to list all household members, as the size of your household determines your income cutoff for free and reduced price meals.
- **G)** Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. The household's primary wage earner or another adult household member must enter the last four digits of their Social Security Number in the space provided. You are eligible to apply for benefits even if you do not have a Social Security Number. If no adult household members have a Social Security Number, leave this space blank and mark the box to the right labeled "Check if no SS#."

Sources of Income for Adults					
Earnings from Work	Public Assistance/Alimony/ Child Support	Farming / Pensions / Retirement / All Other Income			
 Salary, wages, cash bonuses Net income from self-employment (farm or business) Strike benefits If you are in the U.S. Military:	 Unemployment benefits Worker's compensation Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Cash assistance from State or local government 	Farm income Social Security (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits) Private Pensions or disability Income from trusts or estates			
 Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA or privatized housing allowances) Allowances for off-base housing, food, and clothing 	 Alimony payments Child support payments Veteran's benefits 	 Annuities Investment income Earned interest Rental income Regular cash payments from outside household 			

STEP 4: CONTACT INFORMATION AND ADULT SIGNATURE

All applications must be signed by an adult member of the household. By signing the application, that household member is promising that all information has been truthfully and completely reported. Before completing this section, please also make sure you have read the privacy and civil rights statements on the back of the application.

- A) Provide your contact information. Write your current address in the fields provided if this information is available. If you have no permanent address, this does not make your children ineligible for free or reduced price school meals. Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional, but helps us reach you quickly if we need to contact you.
- **B)** Sign and print your name. Print your name in the box "Printed name of adult completing the form." Sign your name in the box "Signature of adult completing the form."
- C) Write Today's Date. In the space provided, write today's date in the box.
- D) Share children's Racial and Ethnic Identities (optional). On the back of the application, we ask you to share information about your children's race and ethnicity. This field is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price school meals.

2015-2016 Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals or Free Milk

O New Applicant O Previous Applicant

Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

Printed name of adult completing the form

STEP 1 List ALL H	ousehold Members who are infants, child	dren, and students (up to and	including grade 12		(if mo	ore spaces are re	quired for addi	tional names, atta	ch another sheet of p	aper)
	Child's Name		Age	Write in name of c	hild's scł	nool, or "not	in school"			If a student, write in the grade	Homeles Foster Migrant Child Runaway
Definition of Household Member : "Anyone who is											
living with you and shares income and expenses, even if not related."										ylq	
Children in Foster care and										all that apply	
children who meet the definition of Homeless,										Check all 1	
Migrant or Runaway are eligible for free meals. Read How to Apply for Free and										Ğ	
Reduced Price School Meals for more information.											
											- 🗆
STEP 2 Do any H	ousehold Members (including you) curre	ently participate in	one or mo	ore of the following	assistaı	nce prograr	ns: SNAP, TAN	F, or FDPIR?		Circle one: `	es / No
	If you are a supported NO x Constants CTEDS 2 and	I.4 If you	neworod V	ES > Write your 9-digit	CNADor	TANE or the	EDDID case numb		Case Number:		
	If you answered NO > Complete STEPS 3 and	, ,		. If you get MedicAid, o				3 and 4.	Write only one case number	r in this space	
STEP 3 Report In	come for ALL Household Members	(Skip this step	if you ans	wered 'Yes' to STEP 2)				White only one case number	in this space.	
	A. Child Income					hild income		ow often? eekly 2x Month Mont	thly Child income		v often? kly 2x Month Monthly
Please read How to	Sometimes children in the household earn incomisted in STEP 1 here. Report income in whole do		OTAL incom	e earned by all children	\$	inia income	Weekly bi-we) O) \$	Weekly bi-wee	Ny 2X MOITH MOITHIN
Apply for Free and	B. All Adult Household Members (includin				7				<u> </u>		0 0
Reduced Price School Meals for more	List all Household Members not listed in STEP 1 whole dollars only. If they do not receive income										
information. The Sources of Income for		•		How often?	Pub	lic Assistance/	How	often?	Farming/ Pensions/	How often?	
Children section will help you with the Child	Name of Adult Household Members (First and Last)	Earnings from Work	Weekly	Bi-Weekly 2x Month Monthly		d Support/Alimon	y Weekly Bi-Week	ly 2x Month Monthly		ncome Weekly Bi-Weekly	2x Month Monthly An
Income question. The Sources of Income for		\$		0 0 0	\$		0 0	0 0	\$	0 0	0 0 (
Adults section will help you with the All Adult		\$	0	0 0 0	\$		0 0	0 0	\$	0 0	0 0 (
Household Members section.		\$	0	0 0 0	\$		0 0	0 0	\$	0 0	0 0 0
		\$	0	0 0 0	\$		0 0	0 0	\$	0 0	0 0 (
	Total Household Members (Children and Adults)	Last Four Digits of So Primary Wage Earne		Number (SSN) of ult Household Member	X	хх	X X		Check if no SSN		
STEP 4 Contact i	nformation and adult signature. SIGN	NATURE IS REQUIR	ED								
	n on this application is true and that all income is reported. lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under ap			on is given in connection w	vith the rec	eipt of Federal f	unds, and that scho	ool officials may v	erify (check) the inform	nation. I am aware that if I I	ourposely give
Street Address (if available)	Apt#	City		State		Zip	Dayt	ime Phone and E	Email (optional)		

Today's date

Signature of adult completing the form

We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

Ethnicity (check one):	Race (check one or more):
Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino	American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian White
	Black or African American Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of

an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.us - da.gov/complaint-filing-cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov .

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FOR SCHOOL/CENTER USE ONLY						
Total income & how often:	SNAP / FDPIR/ TANF or other eligible program household categorically eligible free					
-/	Number of foster children eligible free:					
Household size:	Eligibility Classification: O Free Rate O Reduced Price Rate O Paid Rate					
Othernotes:	Date notification sent: Date withdrawn or transf	ferred:				
	Signature of Determining Official	Date:				
	Signature of Confirmation Official	Date:				