

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Linden Community Schools** offers healthy meals every school day. For the 2021-2022 school year these meal will be offered at no cost to your household. That being said, it is still very important to fill out a free and reduced priced meal application, as it can impact the amount of money received from a variety of State and Federal programs. 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.

FEDERAL INCOME ELIGIBILITY CHART for School Year 2020-2021

Household Size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	23,828	1,986	459
2	32,227	2,686	620
3	40,626	3,386	782
4	49,025	4,086	943
5	57,424	4,786	1,105
6	65,823	5,486	1,266
7	74,222	6,186	1,428
8	82,621	6,886	1,589
Each additional person:	8,399	700	162

1. 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: **Linden Food Service, 7201 W Silver Lake Rd. Linden, MI 48451. You may call our office at (810) 591-0435**
2. 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 received carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Michele Lubahn at (810) 591-0435 or email at mlubahn@lindenschools.org** immediately.
3. CAN I APPLY ONLINE? Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Visit www.lindenschools.org, click on “Our District”, then “Food Services”, look for the “What’s New” button on the first page and click on it, then click on lunchapp.com to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact **Michele Lubahn at (810) 591-0435** if you have any questions about the online application.
4. 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, through **October 6, 2021**. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals for the 2021-2022 school year, please fill out a new application.
5. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
6. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL’S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **Brett Young, 7205 W Silver Lake Rd. Linden, MI 48451, (810) 591-0980, or email at byoung@lindenschools.org.**
7. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOULD 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.

8. **WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?** List the amount that you normally 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 occasionally. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
9. **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.
10. **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, 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.
11. **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. Contact **Michele Lubahn, 7201 W Silver Lake Rd. Linden, MI 48451, (810) 591-0435, or mlubahn@lindenschools.org**, to receive a second application.
12. **MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR?** To find out how to apply for **Food Assistance Program (FAP)** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call **1-855-275-6424**.

If you have other questions or need help, call **(810) 591-0435**.

Sincerely,

Michele Lubahn