



With the passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the National School Lunch Program now includes a new meal program, the “Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).” CEP permits approved schools to provide meals to all enrolled students at no charge, regardless of economic status.

In Houston County, CEP began with 10 schools in School Year for the 2013-2014 school year. For the 2020-2021 school year, our county will have 19 schools that benefit from this program. The following schools will provide meals to all enrolled students at no charge: CB Watson Primary, Centerville Elementary, WIN Academy, Huntington Middle, Lindsey Elementary, Miller Elementary, Morningside Elementary, Northside Elementary, Northside High, Northside Middle, Parkwood Elementary, Pearl Stephens Elementary, Russell Elementary, Shirley Hills Elementary, Thompson Middle, Tucker Elementary, Warner Robins Middle, Warner Robins High, and Westside Elementary.

To qualify, a school must have 40 percent or more students eligible for free meals based on direct certification. Children are considered directly certified if they live in households that participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). In addition, foster, homeless, runaway, or migrant children are included in the directly certified category. Schools will be re-evaluated annually to determine if they continue to meet CEP criteria.

Students enrolled in the aforementioned schools are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast, lunch, and snack (if the child is enrolled in an eligible after school program) at school at no cost to the household each day of the 2020-2021 school year. The meal they are served will be the same meal students who are enrolled in non-CEP schools will receive. As long as the child is enrolled in a qualified school and consumes the meals at that school, no further action is required on the part of the child, parent, or guardian. The child can receive meals at no cost without having to pay a fee or submit a Free and Reduced Meal Application.

While the regular breakfast, lunch, and after school snack will be provided at no cost to students enrolled in CEP schools, supplemental sale items such as chips, cookies, tea, etc. will still be available for purchase. These items can be purchased with cash, check (made payable to School Nutrition), or monies that have been placed on the child’s online account at MyLunchMoney.com.

In addition, the ability for a child to eat free is associated with the school they attend. Therefore, if a child transfers to a school that is not listed above, the parent or guardian will need to provide payment for the child’s meals until a Free and Reduced Meal Application is completed and the parent or guardian receives notice that it is approved.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact the School Nutrition Department at (478) 322-3308 or email Robin Black, Free and Reduced Secretary, at Robin.Black@hcbe.net.