

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Quincy Public Schools offer healthy meals every school day. For **School Year 2016-17**, meal prices are as follows: Elementary Schools breakfast \$1.00 and lunch \$2.25. Middle Schools breakfast \$1.25 and lunch \$2.50. High Schools breakfast \$1.50 and lunch is \$2.50. Reduced price breakfast is 25 cents and reduced price lunch is 40 cents at all school levels.

Your child(ren) may qualify for free or reduced price school meals. 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.

Please Note: If you have received a “Direct Certification” letter this school year saying that your child(ren) are approved for free meals then you do not need to complete an application. If you received a Direct Certification for one but not all of your household’s school age children, or if you have questions, please call the Food Service Department at 617-984-8768. If this is a toll call, you may request to reverse the charges.

If you did not receive a “Direct Certification” letter then you will need to submit a Free and Reduced Price School Meal Application either online or via paper application form. Application forms are available at www.quincypublicschools.com

Or, you may apply online by going to the website: www.heartlandapps.com and selecting the Quincy Public Schools. The online application process is fast, safe, secure, and private. You may submit a paper application if you prefer.

1. 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 you have received a “Direct Certification” letter indicating that your child is eligible for the new school year.

2. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? NO, submit only one application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in Quincy. The application must be filled out completely. **We cannot approve an application that is not complete.** Your completed application may be returned to any one of your children’s schools or **mailed to:**

Quincy Public Schools, Food Service Department, 60 Lancaster Street, Quincy, MA 02169

3. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?

- All children in households receiving benefits from MA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) get free meals regardless of your income.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway or migrant 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 may receive free or reduced meals if your household’s **gross** income is within the limits of the Federal Income 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 2016-2017			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$ 423
2	\$29,637	\$2,470	\$ 570
3	\$37,296	\$3,108	\$ 718
4	\$44,955	\$3,747	\$ 865
5	\$52,614	\$4,385	\$1,012
6	\$60,273	\$5,023	\$1,160
7	\$67,951	\$5,663	\$1,307
8	\$75,647	\$6,304	\$1,455
Each additional person:	+\$7,696	\$ +642	\$ +148

4. 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 contact the Quincy Public Schools homeless liaison, Leslie Bridson at 617-376-1197 or by email at lesliebridson@quincypublicschools.com

5. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please complete and send in an application.

6. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes, we may ask for written proof of the household income you submit.

7. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year.

8. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? Contact the Food Service Office at 617 984-8768 to discuss your application. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: James E. Mullaney, Director of Business Affairs, 34 Coddington Street, Quincy, MA 02169, 617-984-8771.

9. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be a U.S. citizen to apply for free or reduced price school meals.

10. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD? You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as relatives, or friends) who share income and expenses. Include yourself and all children who live with you. If you live with other people who are economically independent (for example, people who you do not support, who do not share income with you or your children, and who pay a pro-rated share of expenses), do not include them.

11. 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.

12. 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 sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.

13. 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 received Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments, it must be reported 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.

14. 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. Application forms are available online at www.quincypublicschools.com

15. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for **MA SNAP** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call **the MA SNAP Hotline at 1-866-950-3663**. **For help paying your heating bills this winter call** Quincy Community Action at 617 479-8181x301.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard DeCristofaro,
Superintendent, Quincy Public Schools