

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOOL MEAL ACCOUNTS

Children need healthy meals to learn. It is the policy of the OA and BCIG Community School Districts to offer a healthy breakfast and lunch to all students registered and attending a district attendance center. The OA and BCIG Food Service Departments are federally funded; therefore, not authorized to extend credit for unpaid school meals. If you are having financial difficulties – We Want to Help You! The OA and BCIG School Districts encourage families to complete an Iowa Eligibility Application for free or reduced-price school meals. One application will cover all of your children attending any of the OA and/or BCIG Community School District buildings. If you qualify, your child(ren) may eat free or reduced-price school meals. Reduced price breakfasts cost \$.30 and reduced price lunches cost \$.40. A la carte items, second entrees, second meals, juice and extra milks are not included in the free or reduced-price school meal offerings and can only be purchased from a school meal account carrying a positive balance or with cash at the point of service.

Foster children, homeless, runaway and migrant children, children who receive food assistance or FIP and children enrolled in Head Start all qualify for free school meals. Your children can get free or reduced-price school meals if your household income is within the free or reduced-price limits on the Federal Income Guidelines when you complete your Iowa Eligibility Application. You or your children do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.

We cannot approve an application that is not complete and signed, so be sure to complete all required information. One completed Iowa Eligibility Application per family listing all of the people living in the household, related or not, that share income and expenses is required. College students, who still use your home address as their permanent address, are considered a part of the household. You may apply for free or reduced-price school meals any time during the school year, especially if your income goes down, household size increases, you lose your job or you become eligible for Food Assistance, FIP or other benefits. At Verification time you may be asked to provide written proof of your income information; however, do NOT provide proof at the time you complete your application. If you disagree with the school's decision concerning the eligibility determination of your application, you may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **Superintendent Mr. Terry Kenealy, 900 John Montgomery Drive, Ida Grove, IA 51445, 712-364-3687 OR 600 S Maple Street, Odebolt, IA 51458, 712-668-2289.**

Not everyone has to complete an Iowa Eligibility Application to receive free school meal benefits for their children. School enrollment records are compared to DHS records to identify children who are members of households receiving Food Assistance or FIP benefits. If ANY of your children are identified during this process ALL of your children will be directly certified to receive free school meal benefits. If you are notified by the school of your children's eligibility, parents need to do nothing further for their children to receive free school meals. Some eligible children may not be identified by this process and those households should receive a letter of direct certification from DHS. Children on these letters will receive free school meal benefits only if parents provide this letter to the school.

Because all preschool children are now offered school meals, there is no Special Milk Program in either district.

If you have any questions relating to free or reduced-price school meals or would like help completing the Iowa Eligibility Application, contact Wanda Schiernbeck at the BCIG Central Office, 900 John Montgomery Drive in Ida Grove or call 712-364-3687 or email wschiernbeck@oabcig.org

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. OA and BCIG Community School Districts are an equal opportunity provider and employer.