FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH APPLICATION AND BENEFITS

The Laurel Highlands School District recommends that all families apply for free and reduced lunch benefits through the School Breakfast Program (SBP) & the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Even if you don't meet income guidelines, you still may be eligible for benefits through other Department of Human Services programs. Doing so is quite easy. Please review your options below:

Online Option

- You can visit www.lhsd.org and click on the cafeteria tab. From there, choose the option "Online Lunch Application." You will be directed to the PA Meals online lunch application. Just fill in the required information and submit it's that easy! The LHSD Food Service Department director will verify the information and mail/email a letter with your child's lunch status. This is the most efficient and confidential way to submit your application.
- You can also visit the PA Meals application site directly at <u>www.paschoolmeals.com</u> and fill out the online application.

Paper Application Option

Each school building has been provided with free and reduced lunch applications. Please contact your child's school and request that a paper application be sent home with your child. You only need one application per household. Once the application has been completed, please return it to your child's school. The application will be delivered to the district's food service director for further processing. Paper applications are then kept on file for future reference.

Keep the following points in mind with regards to Free and Reduced Lunch Benefits.

- 1. You can apply for benefits at any time. If your income is reduced throughout the school year, you may apply or reapply for benefits at any point.
- 2. You can never lose your benefits for the school year once you attain them. This means that if you qualify for free meals at the beginning of the year and your income greatly increases, you will not lose those benefits for the remainder of the school year.
- 3. If you receive a Direct Certification Letter from the district's food service department, you do not need to complete an application. Your benefits were automatically uploaded into our system through the Department of Human Services.
- 4. Your child will maintain their previous year's benefits for the first thirty days of school. After that, all benefits will refer back to "paid" status until an application is on file. You will be responsible for any balance that accrues during this time.

Laurel Highlands School District

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Laurel highlands School District offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs [\$1.00]; lunch costs [\$2.50]. Your child(ren) 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 and reduced-price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help with the application process.

If you have received a **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION** letter for free meals, **do not** complete the application. But **do** let the school know if any children in your household are not listed on the **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION** letter received.

- 1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS OR SPECIAL MILK?
 - All children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits are eligible for free meals.
 - Foster children who 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.

Family Size	Annually	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekh
1	\$23,828	1,986	993	917	459
2	32,227	2,686	1,343	1,240	620
3	40,626	3,386	1,693	1,563	782
4	49,025	4,086	2,043	1,888	943
5	57,424	4,786	2,393	2,209	1,105
6	65,823	5,480	2,743	2,532	1,266
7	74,222	6,186	3,093	2,855	1,428
B	82,621	6,886	3,443	3,178	1,589
	For ea	ch additional	family member	add	
	8,399	700	350	324	162

- 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 have not been told your children will get free meals, email [homeless@lhsd.org].
- 3. 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. An application that is not complete cannot be approved, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: Jason Johns, 304 Bailey Ave. Uniontown, PA 15401 or your school office.
- 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 read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification letter, contact **Jason Johns**, 724-437-2821 ext. 1021 immediately.
- 5. 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.schoolcafe.com] or the PA Department of Human Services website at www.compass.state.pa.us.
- 6. 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 30 operating school 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.
- 7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC <u>may</u> be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Send in an application.

- 8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
- 9. 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/or reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
- 10. 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: [Jason Johns, 724-437-2821 ext. 1021].
- 11. 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.
- 12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1,000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1,000 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. 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, write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will <u>also</u> be counted as zeroes. Be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you <u>meant</u> 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.
- 15. 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 [Jason Johns, 724-437-2821 ext. 1021] to receive a second application.
- 16. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for SNAP or other assistance benefits, visit <u>www.compass.state.pa.us</u>, contact your local county assistance office, or call 1-800-692-7462.

If you have other questions or need help, call [724-437-2821 ext. 1021].

Sincerely,

Jason Johns

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination <u>Complaint Form</u>, (AD-3027) found online at, https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint, and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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ATTENTION: If you speak Spanish, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Contact your child's school. ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Comuníquese con la escuela de su niño.

HOW TO APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS or SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM

school meals. Follow these instructions in order! Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on the application. If at any time you are not sure what to attend more than one school in Haurer Highlands School District). The application must be filled out completely to certify your children for free or reduced-price do next, contact [Jason Johns at 7/24 497 282] Jext 1021 Use these instructions to help fill out the application for free or reduced-price school meals. Submit only one application per household, even if your children

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

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, 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 (Laure) Highlands School District), regardless of age

child. When printing names, write one letter in application, attach a second piece of paper are more children present than lines on the each hex. Stop If you run out of space. If there A) List each child's name. Print each child's with all required information for the additiona name. Use one line of the application for each

B) Is the child a student at [Laurel student in the Gradle contrain to titled "Student" to tell us which highlands School District)? Wark 'Yes,' write the grade level of the School District]. If you marked 'Yes' or 'No' under the coldina children attend [Laubel Highlands

C) Do you have any foster children? If any children applying for foster children, after finishing STEP 1 box next to the child's name. If you are ONLY listed are foster children, mark the "Foster Child" members of your household and should be listed or your application. If you are applying for both foster Foster children who live with you may count as

D) Are any children homeless, migrant, child's name and complete all steps of Migrant, Runaway" box next to the description, mark the "Homeless, listed in this section meets this or runaway? If you believe any child

SHEP 2: DO ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN SNAP OFTANE?

If anyone in your household (including you) currently participates in one or more of the assistance programs listed below, your children are eligible for free school meals:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- A) If no one in your household participates in any of the The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- above listed programs: Leave STEP 2 blank and go to STEP 3.
 - B) If anyone in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:
- these programs and do not know your case number, contact: 1-877-395-8930 or your local assistance office. Write a case number for SNAP or TANF. You only need to provide one case number. If you participate in one of

STEP 3: REPORT INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

How do I report my income?

- income to report. Use the charts titled "Sources of Income for Adults" and "Sources of Income for Children" printed on the back side of the application form to determine if your household has
- o Gross income is the total income received before taxes Report all amounts in GROSS INCOME ONLY. Report all income in whole dollars. Do not include cents
- o 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 also be counted as a zero. If you write '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. If local officials suspect that your household income was reported incorrectly, your application will be investigated.
- Mark how often each type of income is received, using the check boxes to the right of each field

3.A. REPORT INCOME EARNED BY CHILDREN

count faster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household. A) Report all income earned or received by children. Report the combined gross income for ALL children listed in STEP 1 in your household in the box marked "Child Income." Only

What is Child Income? Child income is maney received from outside your household that is paid DIRECTLY to your children. Many households do not have any child income

3.B. REPORT INCOME EARNED BY ADULTS

Who should I list here?

- do not receive income of their own When filling out this section, include ALL adult members in your household who are living with you and share income and expenses, even if they are not related and even if they
- 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
- Infants, Children, and Students already listed in STEP 1.

E) Report income from pensions/ ... follow the instructions in STEP 3, part A. If a child listed in STEP'1 has income, (First air d Last)." Do not list any "Names of Adult Household Members household member in the boxes marked names. Print the name of each B) List adult household members' household members you listed in STEP 1. expenses of your business from its gross receipts or revenue. "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the amount. This is calculated by subtracting the total operating business or farm owner, you will report your net income. money received from working at jobs. If you are a self-employed C) Report earnings from work. Report all income from work in the What if I am self-employed? Report income from that work as a net

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 affects your eligibility for free and reduced-price meals.

the application.

Retirement/All Other Income" field on

income that applies in the "Pensions/

retirement/all other income. Report all

D) Report income from public assistance/child support/
allmony. Report all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/
Child Support/Alimony" field on the application. Do not report
the cash value of any public assistance benefits NOT listed on the
chart. If income is received from child support or alimony, only
report court-ordered payments. Informal but regular payments
should be reported as "other" income in the next part.

G) Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. An 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 SSN."

TEP 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, also make sure you have read the privacy and civil rights statements on the back of the application.

Sharing a phone number, exist at children meligible for free or reduced an A) Provide your contact information. Write your current If you have no permanent address, this does not address in the fields provided if this information is available ... In the box "Signature of adult." the name of the adult signing the B) Print and sign your name. Print plication and that person signs

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.

STEP 3 Report Income for ALL Household Members (Skip hits stip if you seaward Year to STEP 4) A. Child Income for ALL Household Members (Skip hits stip if you seaward Year to STEP 4) A. Child Income for ALL Household Members (Skip hits stip if you seaward Year to STEP 4) A. Child Income for ALL Household Members (Including yourse) A. Child Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) A. Child Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) A. Child Income for Childran For Johnson is received from my source, with 9'. If you enter Y or leave any fladic labar, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. The Stources of Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) A. Child Income B. A. Child Income For Johnson is received from my source, with 9'. If you enter Y or leave any fladic labar, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. The Stources of Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) are not leave any fladic labar, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. The Stources of Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) are not labar. The Stources of Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) are sourced in the form of the All Household Members (Including yourse) are not labar. The Stources of Income for All Household Members (Including yourse) are not labar. The Stources of Income in All Household Members (Including yourse) are not labar. The Stources of Childran The Stources
FIRE 3 Report Income for ALL Household Members (Skip this slop if you answered Yes to STEP 4 (Do not complete STEP 1) A. Child Income Sometimes children in the household Members (listed in STEP 1 (Including yourself) List all Household Members disted in STEP 1 (Including yourself) List all Household Members (Includi
Dr W
or w
Income income
post-lincome that here? review
ncome
Report Income for ALL Household Members (Skip this step if you answered 'Yes' to STEP 2) A. Child Income Sometimes children in the household earn or receive income. Include the TOTAL income received by all Household Members listed in STEP 1 here.
If NO > Go to STEP 3. If YES > Write a case number here, then go to STEP 4 (Do not complete 3. Report Income for ALL Household Members (Skip this step if you answered 'Yes' to STEP 2)
Meals for more information.
Migrant, or Runaway are eligible for free meals. Read How to Apply for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals for more information.
Children in Foster care and children who meet the definition of Homeless, Migrant, or Runaway are eligible for free meals. Read How to Apply for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals for more information.
living with you and shares income and expenses, even if not related." Children in Foster care and children who meet the definition of Homeless, Migrant, or Runaway are eligible for free meals. Read How to Apply for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals for more information.

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

OPTIONAL Children's Racial and Ethnic Identities

Ethnicity (check one):

☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

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.

The Dichard R Discoll National	Race (check one or more):
The Dichard B. Duesoll National Cohool I wash Astronation the information on this position of the position of	Race (check one or more): American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian Black or African American
Application Val. do	Asian B
Persons with disabilities who require alternation	ack or African American
ho require attemative means of communication for program information (e.g. Ro	Native Hawaiiar
lation (e.g. Bra	☐ White

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.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retallation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-8992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax: (202) 690-7442; or

email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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All Household Applications must be returned to your child's school for processing

Confirming Official's Signate	Eligibility: 🗆 Free	Total Income:		Do not fill out
Confirming Official's Signature (cannot be the Determining Official):	☐ Reduced ☐ Denied Reason:	Per: D Week, D Every 2 Weeks, D Twice A Month, D Monthly, DYearly,		For School Use Only
		onthly, □Yearly.	Annual inc	
Date:	☐ Categorically Eligible	Household Size:	come Conversion: Weeki	
Signature of School Employee Completing Verification:	☐Other Source Categorically Eligible	Date Withdrawn:	Annual Income Conversion: Waskly x 52, Every 2 Weeks x 26, Twice A Month x 24, Monthly	
g Verification:	Determining Official's Signature:		x 24, Monthly x 12	
Date:				
	Date:			