FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Riverdale School District** offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs **$1.20**; lunch costs **grades PK-4 $2.15, grades 5-12 $2.40**. **Your children 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 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.

1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?
   - All children in households receiving benefits from FoodShare, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or W-2 Cash Benefits 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 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.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2015-2016			
Household size	Yearly ($)	Monthly ($)	Weekly ($)
1	21,775	1,815	419
2	29,471	2,456	567
3	37,167	3,098	715
4	44,863	3,739	863
5	52,559	4,380	1,011
6	60,255	5,022	1,159
7	67,951	5,663	1,307
8	75,647	6,304	1,455
Each additional person:	7,696	642	148

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 haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail **Emily Dickman at 739-3101 or emily.dickman@riverdale.k12.wi.us.**

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.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: **Riverdale Schools, Mindy Kratochwill, PO BOX 66 Muscoda, WI 53573, 739-3116**.

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 please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Mindy Kratochwill, PO BOX 66 Muscoda, WI 53573, 739-3116, mkratochwill@riverdale.k12.wi.us** 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.riverdale.k12.wi.us (Skyward Family account)** to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact **Mindy Kratochwill, PO BOX 66 Muscoda, WI 53573, 739-3116, mkratochwill@riverdale.k12.wi.us** if you have any questions about the online application.

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 few 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 may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please 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 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: **Bryce Bird, PO BOX 66 Muscoda, WI 53573, 739-3832, bbird@riverdale.k12.wi.us**.

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 $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. 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.

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 **Mindy Kratochwill, PO BOX 66, Muscoda, WI 53573, 739-3116, mkratochwill@riverdale.k12.wi.us** 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 FoodShare or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-362-3002.

If you have other questions or need help, call **739-3116**.

Sincerely,

Bryce Bird

HOW TO APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the application for free or reduced price school meals. You only need to submit **one** application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in Riverdale School District. The application must be filled out completely to certify your children for free or reduced price school meals.

Please follow these instructions in order! Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on your application. If at any time you are not sure what to do next, please contact **Mindy Kratochwill at 739-3116 or mkratochwill@riverdale.k12.wi.us**.

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

STEP 1: LIST ALL INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND STUDENTS UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE 12 WHO ARE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

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, please 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, runaway youth, or Head Start;
- Students attending **Riverdale,** *regardless of age.*

A) List each child's name. For each child, print their first name, middle initial and last name. Use one line of the application for each child. When writing names, print one letter in each box. Stop if you run out of space. If there are more children present than lines on the application, attach a second piece of paper with all required information for the additional children.

B) List the name of the school the child attends or N/A if the child does not attend school.

C) Do you have any foster children? If any children listed are foster children, mark the "Foster Child" box next to the child's name. **Foster children who live with you may count as members of your household and should be listed on your application.** If you are only applying for foster children, after completing STEP 1, skip to STEP 4 of the application and these instructions.

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

E) Are any children in Head Start? If any child is enrolled in a Head Start Program, check the Head Start box after the child's name and complete all steps of the application.

STEP 2: DO ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (INCLUDING YOU) CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: FOODSHARE, W-2 CASH BENEFITS, OR FDPIR?

If anyone in your household participates in the assistance programs listed below, your children are <u>eligible</u> for free school meals:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or FoodShare
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or W-2 Cash Benefits
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

A) IF *NO ONE* IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:

- ***Circle 'NO' and skip to STEP 3 on these instructions and STEP 3 on your application.***
- ***Leave STEP 2 blank.***

B) IF *ANYONE* IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATES IN ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED PROGRAMS:

- ***Circle 'YES' and provide a case number for FoodShare, W-2 Cash Benefits, or FDPIR.*** You only need to write **one** case number. If you participate in one of these programs and do not know your case number, contact your case worker. **You <u>must</u> provide a case number on your application if you circled "YES".** Please note: A BadgerCare case number cannot be used on this application, only the programs listed above.
- ***Skip to STEP 4, leave STEP 3 blank.***

STEP 3: REPORT INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

A) Report all income earned by children. Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Children" in these instructions and report the combined gross income for **ALL** children listed in Step 1 in your household in the box marked "Child Income." Only count foster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household. It is optional for the household to list foster children living with them as part of the household.

What is Child Income?

Child income is money received from outside your household that is paid **directly** to your children. Many households do not have any child income. Use the chart below to determine if your household has child income to report.

Sources of Income for Children

Sources of Child Income	Example(s)
• Earnings from work	• A child has a job where they earn a salary or wages.
• Social Security o Disability Payments o Survivor's Benefits	• A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits. • A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives social security benefits.
• Income from persons *outside* the household	• A friend or extended family member *regularly* gives a child spending money.
• Income from any other source	• A child receives income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust.

FOR EACH ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBER:

Who should I list here?

When filling out this section, please include **all** members in your household who are:

- Living with you and share income and expenses, *even if not related and even if they do not receive income of their own.*

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.
- Children and students already listed in Step 1.

How do I fill in the income amount and source?

FOR EACH TYPE OF INCOME:

- Use the charts in this section to determine if your household has income to report.
- Report all amounts in **gross income** ONLY. Report all income in whole dollars. Do not include cents.
  - Gross income is the total income received before taxes or deductions.
  - 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 be counted as zeroes. If you write '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. If local officials have known or available information that your household income was reported incorrectly, your application will be verified for cause.
- Mark how often each type of income is received using the check boxes to the right of each field.

B) ***List Adult Household member's name.*** Print the name of each household member in the boxes marked "Names of Adult Household Members (First and Last)." **Do not list any household members you listed in STEP 1.** If a child listed in STEP 1 has income, follow the instructions in STEP 3, part A.

C) ***Report earnings from work.*** Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income from work in the "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the money received from working at jobs. If you are a self-employed business or farm owner, you will report your net income.

What if I am self-employed?

If you are self-employed, report income from that work as a **net** amount. This is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts or revenue.

D) ***Report income from Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony/SSI/VA Benefits.*** Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony/SSI/VA Benefits" field on the application. Do not report the value of any cash value public assistance benefits NOT listed on the chart. If income is received from child support or alimony, only **court-ordered** payments should be reported here. Informal but regular payments should be reported as "other" income in the next part.

E) ***Report income from Pensions/Retirement/Social Security/All other income.*** Refer to the chart titled "Sources of Income for Adults" in these instructions and report all income that applies in the "Pensions/Retirement/Social Security, Other Income" field on the application.

F) ***Special Situations.*** For seasonal workers and others whose income fluctuates and usually earn more money in some months than others. In these situations, project the annual rate of income and report that. This includes workers with annual employment contracts but may choose to have salaries paid over a shorter period of time. This includes school employees.

G) ***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 determines your income cutoff for free and reduced price meals.

H) ***Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number.*** The household's primary wage earner or another 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."

Sources of Income for Adults

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

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

A) ***Provide your contact information.*** Write your current address in the fields provided if this information is available. **If you have no permanent address, this does not make your children ineligible for free or reduced price school meals.** Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional, but helps us reach you quickly if we need to contact you.

B) ***Sign and print your name.*** Print your name in the box "Printed name of adult completing the form." And sign your name in the box "Signature of adult completing the form."

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 meals.**

2015-2016 Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Apply online at: www.riverdale.k12.wi.us (Skyward Family acct)

Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

STEP 1 List ALL infants, children, and students up to and including grade 12 who are Household Members

(If more spaces are required for additional names, attach another sheet of paper.

Definition of **Household Member**: "Anyone who is living with you and shares income and expenses, even if not related."

Child's First Name	MI	Child's Last Name	School the Child Attends or NA if not in school	Homeless, Foster Child	Migrant, Runaway	Head Start
				☐	☐	☐
				☐	☐	☐
				☐	☐	☐
				☐	☐	☐
				☐	☐	☐

Check all that apply

STEP 2 Do any Household Members (including you) currently participate in any of the following assistance programs: FoodShare, W-2 Cash Benefits, or FDPIR? Yes / No

If you answered NO > Complete STEP 3. **If you answered YES** > Write a case number here, then go to STEP 4 (Do not complete STEP 3)

Case Number:

Write only one case number in this space.

Program Name:

Note: Do not include BadgerCare in Step 2

STEP 3 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 income. Please include the TOTAL income earned by all infants, children and students up to and including grade 12 of all Household Members listed in STEP 1 here.

Child income $ ____

How often? Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○

B. All Adult Household Members (including yourself)

List all Household Members not listed in STEP 1 (including yourself) **even if they do not receive income**. For each Household Member listed, if they do receive income, report total income for each source in whole dollars only. If they do not receive income from any source, write '0'. If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report.

Name of Adult Household Members (First and Last)	C. Earnings from Work	How often?	D. Public Assistance/ Child Support/ Alimony/SSI/VA Benefits	How often?	E. Pensions/Retirement/ Social Security, Other Income	How often?	F. Special Situations
	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$
	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$
	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$
	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$
	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$	Weekly ○ Bi-Weekly ○ 2x Month ○ Monthly ○	$

Seasonal Workers, Annual contract paid over a shorter period of time (school employees), fluctuating income. Annualize income and report here.

G. Total Household Members (Children and Adults) ____

H. Last Four Digits of Social Security Number (SSN) of Primary Wage Earner or Other Adult Household Member X X X X X ____ **Check if no SSN** ☐

STEP 4 Contact information and adult signature

"I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws."

Street Address (if available) | Apt # | City | State | Zip | Daytime Phone and Email (optional)

Printed name of adult completing the form | Signature of adult completing the form | Today's date

OPTIONAL Children's Racial and Ethnic Identities

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.

Ethnicity (check one):

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (check one or more):

☐ White ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

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.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

DO NOT FILL OUT THIS PART. THIS IS FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY.

Annual Income Conversion: Weekly x 52, Every 2 Weeks x 26, Twice A Month x 24, Monthly x 12

Total Income: _____ Per: ❑ Week, ❑ Every 2 Weeks, ❑ Twice A Month, ❑ Month, ❑ Year Household size: _____

Categorical Eligibility: _____ Income Eligibility: Free___ Reduced___ Denied___

Date Withdrawn: _____ Reason for denial or withdrawl: _____

Determining Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Confirming Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Verifying Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____