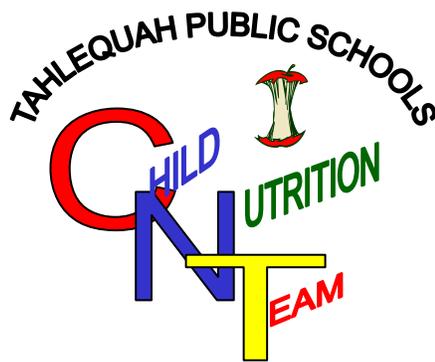


Dana F. Dobson  
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We Serve Education Every Day

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2020-2021 School Year

Dear Elementary Parents/Guardians:

The Child Nutrition Team appreciates the opportunity to serve your children. We believe strongly that there is a direct tie between effective learning and good nutrition. Each school day, our Child Nutrition Team serves nutritious meals that comply with all United States Department of Agriculture guidelines. We also work determinedly to ensure that our students enjoy their cafeteria experience.

Your child will have the opportunity each day to take a meat or meat alternate, fruit, vegetables, bread or grain alternate, and milk (A fruit or vegetable must be taken as one of the choices).

Meal prices are as follows:

Breakfast:	\$17.50 for a 10-day period (\$1.75 per day)
Lunch:	\$27.50 for a 10-day period (\$2.75 per day)
Extra Milk:	\$0.30 per carton

All student accounts are maintained on the MAS computer software system. Students will use their student ID# assigned to them during enrollment. All students will enter their student ID# using a keypad located at the cafeteria cashier's computer.

Charging is allowed up to \$10.00. If a student does not have money in his or her account or owes \$10.00, cash must be provided on a daily basis in order for the student to eat breakfast or lunch with us. Students without funds will be offered a sandwich and milk at no charge.

If your child leaves our district, our account refund policy is as follows: For students with positive balances in their accounts, parents/guardians may request, in writing, a refund of those funds at any time. Child Nutrition will then issue a check, through the Board of Education, for the return of positive balance funds.

If a parent/guardian does not request a refund, positive balances will be re-entered into the student's account for use during the next school year.

If a student does not return to Tahlequah Public School District the following year and the positive balance on account is \$3.00 or less, no refund check will be issued and the positive balance will be considered a donation to the non-profit school food service program.

If a student does not return to Tahlequah Public School district the following year and the positive balance on account exceeds \$3.00, Child Nutrition will mail a check to the last known address of the parent/guardian. If this correspondence is returned to the district unopened, the refund check will be considered a donation to the non-profit school food service program.

We are proud participants in the Free and Reduced Price Meal Program. This program helps not just the Child Nutrition Team, but also the Tahlequah school district as a whole. One of the criteria the district sees repetitively when applying for grants is a high Free and Reduced Price Meal Program count. In some cases, this count affects the outcome of grant applications exclusively. Participation in this Program helps every child in our district!

Please fill out the attached application and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible. While not required, it is extremely important to our school district that every family submits a Free and Reduced Application. 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 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) 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.

<b>FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART for School Year: 2021</b>					
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	23,606	1,968	984	908	454
2	31,894	2,658	1,329	1,227	614
3	40,182	3,349	1,675	1,546	773
4	48,470	4,040	2,020	1,865	933
5	56,758	4,730	2,365	2,183	1,092
6	65,046	5,421	2,711	2,502	1,251
7	73,334	6,112	3,056	2,821	1,411
8	81,622	6,802	3,401	3,140	1,570
Each additional person:	8,288	691	346	319	160

- 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, please call or e-mail:
  - Homeless/Runaway: Nikki Molloy, 918-458-4100, [molloyn@tahlequahschools.org](mailto:molloyn@tahlequahschools.org)
  - Migrant: Polly Winburn, 918-458-4100, [winburnp@tahlequahschools.org](mailto:winburnp@tahlequahschools.org)
- DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Use one Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application for all students who attend any school in the Tahlequah Public School district. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to your child's teacher. If you have children at two or more schools, return the application to one child's teacher at one school.
- 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, please call the Child Nutrition Office at 918-458-4193.
- 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.tahlequahschools.org](http://www.tahlequahschools.org) to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact the Child Nutrition Office at 918-458-4193 if you have any questions about the online application.
- 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 (through September 24, 2020). You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not send in a new application that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full-price for meals.
- I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC **MAY** be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please send in an application.
- WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
- IF I DO NOT 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.
- WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. Please contact the Child Nutrition Director at 918-458-4193. If you disagree with her decision, you also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Superintendent Leon Ashlock, Board of Education, 225 N. Water Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464, 918-458-4100.

11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A UNITED STATES (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, 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, 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 IS NOT 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 the Child Nutrition Office at 918-458-4193 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 benefits or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 918-207-4500 or 1-866-411-1877.

Students who qualify for **free meals** will automatically be allowed one (1) breakfast and one (1) lunch per day with a 2020-2021 approved application. Students approved for **reduced meals**, will be allowed one (1) breakfast and one (1) lunch per day **at the reduced rate of \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch**.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Your cooperation in returning your applications as soon as possible will be greatly appreciated. We look forward to serving your children! If you have any questions or suggestions about our Child Nutrition Program, please feel free to contact me at 918-458-4193. I welcome your input.

Sincerely,

Dana F. Dobson  
Child Nutrition Director  
Tahlequah Public Schools