

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK SD #6

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Cottonwood-Oak Creek SD #6** offers healthy meals every school day. **Breakfast costs \$1.25**; lunch costs **\$2.10**. 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, as well as a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS?

- a. All children in households receiving benefits from **SNAP, FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations)** or **TANF**, can get free meals regardless of your income.
- b. Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- c. Children participating in their school's Head Start Program are eligible for free meals.
- d. Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- e. Children can get free or reduced-price meals if your household's gross 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.

Household Size	Yearly Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income
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 **Barbara Amato, homeless liaison and migrant coordinator, (928) 634-2288**.
3. **SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call the Food Service Office at **(928) 634-4703** if you have any questions.
4. **DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced price meals. *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: **Kitchen manager at your school or Food Service office**.
5. **WHO CAN GET REDUCED-PRICE MEALS?** Your children can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced-price limits on the Federal Eligibility Income Chart, shown above.
6. **MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER 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 CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.
8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes and we may also ask you to send written proof.
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: **Barbara U'ren, Superintendent, (928) 634-2288, 1 N Willard St., Cottonwood, AZ, 86326.**
11. 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 U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
12. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD? You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends) who share income and expenses. You must include yourself and all children living 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.
13. 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.
14. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE INCLUDE OUR HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS INCOME? If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
15. MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS HER COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME? No, if the combat pay is received in addition to her basic pay because of her deployment and it wasn't received before she was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your child's school for more information.
16. CAN I APPLY ONLINE?

No. Our district does not have the option to apply for free or reduced-price meals online at this time. Please contact **Bethany Decker, (928) 639-4703** and refer to the information above to complete a paper application.
17. 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, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-352-8401.

If you have other questions or need help, call **(928) 639-4703**.

Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono: (928) 639-4703.

Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero: (928) 630-4703.

Sincerely,

Bethany Decker