

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE SECTION
NEWS RELEASE**

St. Tammany Parish School Board today announced its policy for free and reduced price meals served under the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program(s). All schools and the central office have a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

The following family size and annual income criteria will be used for determining eligibility:

Eligibility Criteria		
Family Size	Free Meals	Reduced-Price Meals
1	\$14,079	\$20,036
2	\$18,941	\$26,955
3	\$23,803	\$33,874
4	\$28,665	\$40,793
5	\$33,527	\$47,712
6	\$38,389	\$54,631
7	\$43,251	\$61,550
8	\$48,113	\$68,469
For each additional family Member add:	\$4,862	\$ 6,919

Children from families whose income level is at or below the levels shown are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Application forms are being sent to all homes, along with a letter to households. To apply for free or reduced price meals, households should fill out one application for the household and return it to the school. Additional copies are available at the principal's office in each school. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year. The information provided by the household is confidential; it will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility. Information may be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials.

For the school officials to determine eligibility, each household that is now receiving Food Stamps or that is on the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) must provide its Food Stamp case number or FITAP number as well as the signature of an adult household member. All other households must provide the following information on the application: names of all household members; the social security number of either the parent/guardian who is the primary wage earner, or the adult household member who signs the application, or a statement that the household member does not possess one; the amount of income (before deductions for taxes, Social Security, etc.) each household member receives; how often the person receives the income; where it is from, such as wages, retirement, or welfare; and the signature of an adult household member certifying that the information provided is correct. If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact the school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for meal benefits.

Foster children who are the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court may be eligible for benefits. If a household has foster children and wishes to apply for such meals for them, the household should contact the school for more information.

Households that receive Food Stamps or FITAP benefits are not required to complete an application. School officials will determine eligibility for free meals based on documentation obtained directly from the Food Stamp/FITAP office, which will certify that a child is a member of a household currently receiving Food Stamps or an assistance unit receiving FITAP benefits. School officials will notify households of their eligibility. Households who are notified of their eligibility but do not want their children to receive free meals must contact the school. Food Stamp and FITAP households should complete an application if they are not notified of their eligibility by August 21, 2009.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced price policy, the school food service manager will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the ruling of the official, he may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. If the parent wishes to make a formal appeal, he may make either an oral or written response to the following:

**W. L. "Trey" Folsie, Deputy Superintendent
St. Tammany Parish School Board
P. O. Box 940
Covington, LA 70434
(985) 892-2276**

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedures.

Non-Discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. "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. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. "