



Joe Lombardo
GOVERNOR

Free or Reduced-Price School Meal Fact Sheet

As the 2024-2025 school year begins, the Office of the Governor and the Nevada Department of Agriculture want to reiterate the resources available for students who need free or reduced-price school meals. The data provided below is from the 2023-2024 school year for Nevada schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Since the federal free school meal waiver program ended, are students in need still able to get free school meals?

- Yes! **80.6% of Nevada students are automatically eligible for free school meals through their school's Community Eligible Provision (CEP) designation.** A full list of CEP schools can be accessed [here](#), but CEP school districts include Churchill, Clark, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, and White Pine county. If you attend a designated CEP school or school district, any student can automatically receive a free school meal – no application required. (*Note: Although Eureka County and Lander County School Districts do not participate in the NSLP, both school districts provide free school meals for all students.*)
- If your household participates in other federal assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), your student qualifies automatically for free or reduced-price school meals, there is no further action required.
- If a student does not attend a CEP school and their household does not participate in any other federal assistance programs, they can ***still*** fill out the Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals to determine a student's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Any family in need is encouraged to apply.

How does the CEP Program work?

- **87.44% of Nevada schools are CEP eligible for the 2024-2025 school year.** CEP is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and districts in low-income areas, which allows high poverty schools and districts to serve no-cost breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting household applications.
- A school is eligible for CEP status when $\geq 25\%$ of the school's/district's population is at or below 130% of the federal poverty level as directly certified through participation in other federal assistance programs (SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, FDPIR) or when the population identified at the school/district level is experiencing homelessness, relocation, or foster care (not income based).



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- Direct certification is done for students already enrolled in federal programs; they do not have to apply.

Why do we keep hearing that there are no free school meals available for students this year?

- Unfortunately, there has been an increase in misinformation about the availability of free school meals ahead of the 2024-2025 school year. Sadly, some of this misinformation has made its way into media reports, which is why my administration wanted to ensure that the facts about school meal availability were released in a timely manner.
- Through existing programs, every Nevada student in need has access to free meals: 80.6% of our students are automatically eligible for free school meals through their school's CEP designation, any student participating in another federal assistance program is automatically certified for free school meals, and applications are available for any student in need to apply for free or reduced-price school meals.
- The state is well-equipped to provide students in need with free or reduced-price meals through the programs established prior to the pandemic. However, if there is a demonstrated need for more school meal funding this school year, Governor Lombardo will evaluate additional funding proposals that minimize food waste, rely on recurring funding streams, and provide school meals to students who are demonstrably in-need but currently ineligible.
- Nevadans deserve to hear accurate and informed reporting on this issue – not partisan talking points that only serve to scare parents and students.

How do Nevada students in need receive meals during the summer?

- Governor Lombardo provided \$6.2 million in state funding for the Summer Food Service Program, which is administered in partnership through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.
- Through this critical annual program, any Nevada child or teen 18 years and younger can receive free breakfast and lunch throughout the summer.
- Parents, children, and teens can find a meal site near them by visiting nvsummermeals.com, texting "Summer Meals" to 914-342-7744, or calling 1-866-348-6479.