



# Free Meals for All Students

What's happening with the school meal program?





# USDA Extends Free Meals for Kids

- Effective immediately, **ALL** students are eligible to receive **FREE** meals (breakfast and lunch) regardless of socioeconomic status or household income
- The free meals are the result of a nationwide emergency waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- The program will run through December 31, 2020 or until funding runs out (whichever occurs first). At that time, breakfast and lunch meals will return to the normal price.



# What does this mean?

- Students can receive 1 FREE lunch and 1 FREE breakfast per school day
- Meals must meet the existing USDA guidelines in order to be free.
- A la carte items, such as extra entrees, extra milk, extra side servings, snacks and drinks will still be available for purchase at an additional charge.



# What is a reimbursable meal?

- A single priced meal that offers all of the USDA daily required meal pattern components
- Components of a reimbursable meal include meat/meat alternative, grain, fruit, vegetable and milk
- Students only need to take 3 out of the 5 components being offered to count as a reimbursable meal
- The meal is the same price if they select 3,4 or 5 components



# What if my child does not pick the minimum required meal components?

- Student meals that do not meet the USDA requirements are not reimbursable and therefore are not free
- Students are encouraged to select a complete reimbursable meal with at least one fruit or vegetable
- If they refuse to select the 3 minimum components, the individual items on the plate must be charged as an a la carte purchase
- The A la carte prices are higher than regular student meal prices because they are not subsidized by the USDA



# What happens to money on my child's account?

- Any charges for a reimbursable meal purchased since the start of school will be refunded to the student's account
- There will be no cash refunds
- Any balances on the accounts will remain on the account and can be used to purchase snacks, ala carte items or for future meals when the payment holiday has ended



## Completing a free/reduced meal application

- This program is only in effect until December 31, 2020, or until USDA waiver funds run out. At that time, student eligibility status will revert back to either paid, free or reduced
- Please continue to complete applications if you believe you may be eligible. The eligibility list also determines other sources of funding for the district such as Title I, State Aid and E-Rate



# Questions

- Any questions, please contact Leah Hummer at
  - [cafemanager@dvrhs.org](mailto:cafemanager@dvrhs.org)
  - 908.996.2123 ext. 6811



Thank

you

