

Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) Program FAQ's

1. How can my Learning Center participate in the Free/Reduced lunch program?

The following steps need to be completed to participate in the Hope Online Free/Reduced Lunch program:

- a) Submit FRL application to Hope Online, available online at <http://hopeonline.org/FRL.html>
- b) Have Health Inspection completed for your kitchen area (*only if participating in sandwich lunch program*)
- c) Attend informational meeting at Hope Online
- d) Attend mandatory training
- e) Have all families fill out the FRL form

2. What children are eligible?

Eligibility is determined when Parents/Guardians complete the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch form. Parents/Guardians who qualify for food stamps automatically qualify for free meals, but they must still complete the FRL form. Each month, your Learning Center will receive a list of eligible students.

3. What type of meals do we serve?

Hope Online offers two meal choices:

- A shelf-stable boxed lunch from East Side Entrees
- A sandwich program, consisting of a sandwich, vegetable, fruit and milk.

4. How do I obtain the food we serve?

If you participate in East Side Entrees, boxed lunches will be ordered and delivered to the Hope Online office.

If you participate in the sandwich program, all food items will need to be purchased by the Learning Center (and later reimbursed – see question #6). Try purchasing the lunch items at Sams' Club or Wal-Mart as it can help you stay within the reimbursable amount.

5. What are the upfront costs?

If you participate in the East Side Entrees program, there are no upfront costs for your Learning Center.

If you participate in the sandwich program, there may be costs associated with preparing your kitchen to pass inspection. These costs are not reimbursable. You will purchase the food to provide the meals. Plan to budget approximately \$2.00-2.50 per meal in order to stay within the reimbursement amounts.

6. How does reimbursement work?

In order to be reimbursed, the monthly recap must be submitted by the 2nd working day of the month. You will be reimbursed at the following rates based on how many meals you served:

Free = \$2.57 per meal

Reduced = \$2.17

Not Eligible = \$.24

Reimbursement takes about 6 weeks and will flow from DCSD through Hope Online to your Learning Center.

If you participate in East Side Entrees, the purchase amount, billed directly to Hope Online, will be deducted before the reimbursement is sent to your Learning Center.

7. How many staff do I need to participate?

We recommend at least 2 staff members who work during lunch time.

8. How many hours per week do my staff need to dedicate to the program?

One person will need approximately 5 hours per week to complete paperwork.

9. What are the deadlines?

The monthly recap form is due to the Hope Online office on the 2nd working day of the month.