

School Year 2022 - 2023
Gaston County School Nutrition (GCSN)
Information Guide for School Handbooks

1. Breakfast and Lunch are offered daily in all schools.

Breakfast -A complete school breakfast consists of:

An entrée made with grain and /or protein.

Fat free or 1% milk, and

Fruit and/ or juice (limit of one juice per meal)

All students will be required to take at a minimum one serving of fruit or juice and an entree in order to receive a complete School Breakfast at established meal price (or no charge for a CEP schools).

The maximum amount of food a student can select is one entrée, one milk, and one fruit and /or juice.

If student does not select a complete school breakfast as outlined above, they have to pay individually for the items they choose.

Lunch - A complete school Lunch consists of:

An entrée made with protein and/or grain

Fat free or 1% milk,

Vegetable, and

Fruit

All students will be required to take a minimum one serving of vegetable or fruit and two addition items in order to receive a school lunch at established meal price (or no charge for CEP schools).

A lunch entrée may count as two items. At a minimum, a student must select an entrée and a fruit or vegetable OR they must select two fruits or vegetables and two additional items to have the meal count as a lunch.

The maximum amount of food a student can select is one entrée, one milk, two vegetables, and two fruit.

If a student does not select a complete school lunch, as outlined above, they will have to pay individually for the items they choose.

2. Meal Prices

Breakfast

Paid students (all grade levels) \$1.40

Reduced price students (all grade levels) \$0.00

Adults (staff and visitors) \$2.00

Lunch

Paid students (grades K – 5) \$2.90

Paid students (grades 6 – 12) \$3.00

Reduced price students (all grade levels) \$0.40

Adults (staff and visitors) \$4.00

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3. Charged Meals

Students who do not have money may charge a meal if their account has not exceeded the following limits:

Elementary (K-5)	\$14.50
Middle School (6-8)	\$ 6.00
High School (9-12)	no charging allowed

Elementary and middle school students who do not have money and who have exceeded the charge limit may receive a complimentary alternate meal upon request.

Principals will be provided a daily list of students who have exceeded the charge limits so that they can inform the student they will only be able to receive a complimentary alternate meal unless they bring money the following day.

High school students who do not have money may also request a complimentary alternate meal if they are unable to find or borrow money.

Students who have received more than five (5) complimentary alternate meal per year may receive additional complimentary meals at the mutual discretion of the Principal and School Nutrition Director.

Students who apply for free and reduced price meal benefits are responsible for all charges incurred before their Free and Reduced Meal Applications are received by the School Nutrition Department.

Students who have exceeded the charged meal limit may not purchase a la carte items with the exception of milk, fruit juice, or water.

Schools are provided negative balance letters for distribution to students at least once a week.

A negative balance report can be provided by the Cafeteria Manager at any time upon request.

4. Student Accounts

Checks, Cash, or Money Orders can be accepted in the school cafeterias.

Parents/Guardians may utilize Family Portal Link <https://family.titank12.com/AEPULG> to pay with their credit or debit card.

Parents requesting a refund must contact the School Nutrition Free and Reduced Specialist at 704 836-9110 ext. 1.

Positive balances remaining at the end of the school year will remain on students' accounts for the following school year unless a refund is requested.

Seniors who graduate and have a positive meal balance should contact Tina Franks at 704-836-9110 ext. 1 to receive a refund or transfer funds to another child. This must be **done within 1 school year** of graduation.

NSF checks are referred to Envision payment solution, a check guarantee and collection service.

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5. Free and Reduced Meal Application

Paper applications are available at the school office, the school cafeteria, and at School Nutrition Center in Lowell.

Online applications are available on the Gaston County Schools website. Links can be found on the School Nutrition department tab.

Only **one application** is required **per household**.

Paper applications should be returned to the school Cafeteria Manager or the School Nutrition Center - 500 Reid Street Lowell, NC 28098.

Foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits, and should be included on the household application. (Not a separate application)

Students designated as homeless by Gaston County Schools' homeless liaison are categorically eligible for free meals. No application is required, but documentation must be received from the homeless liaison before benefits begin.

If there are other children that have not been identified as being directly certified, but who living in the same household, please contact the Free and Reduced Meal Specialist at the School Nutrition Center in Lowell for assistance, (704) 836-9110 ext. 1.

6. Holiday Meals

- a) Grades K - 12, Wednesday, November 16, 2022
- b) Grades K - 5, Wednesday, December, 14, 2022
- c) **ADULT PRICE FOR HOLIDAY MEALS IS \$4.50**

7. Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Universal Free Breakfast and Lunch.

All nineteen schools participating during SY 21-22 has been renewed for SY 22- 23.

Students transferring /advancing to NON- CEP schools will need to complete a GCSN Free and Reduced Meal Application for school year 2022-2023.

Families of students moving from a CEP school to a NON- CEP, will need to apply for Free and Reduced Meals in order to receive benefits at the new school.

Students who were approved for Free & Reduced meals due to applying in school year 2021 - 2022, will **temporarily** receive free and reduced price meals at the beginning of the School Year 2022-2023. **However**, all households must submit a new application each year, and the application must be processed for benefits to continue after the first 30 school days of the new school year.

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A list of CEP schools is as follows:

School #	School Name	School #	School Name
332	Bessemer City Central Elementary	436	Bessemer City Middle
338	Bessemer City Primary	438	Lingerfeldt Elementary
372	Warlick School	468	North Belmont Elementary
392	Edward D Sadler, Jr. Elementary	480	Pleasant Ridge Elementary
340	Brookside Elementary	492	Hershal H Beam Elementary
344	Carr Elementary	498	Southwest Middle
352	Chapel Grove Elementary	499	Springfield Primary
400	Gardner Park Elementary	504	Tryon Elementary
408	W P Grier Middle	520	Woodhill Elementary
		526	York Chester Middle

8. Special Nutrition Needs

All Students with unique meal time needs must have a new Diet Order form completed.

Diet Order forms may be obtained from the Cafeteria Manager, the School Nurse, the School Nutrition Center in Lowell, or on School Nutrition page on Gaston County School website (www.gaston.k12.nc.us)

The Diet Order form must be signed by a recognized medical authority and returned to the school nurse to submit electronically to the School Nutrition Dietitian mhcameron@gaston.k12.nc.us.

New for this School Year: All students are required to complete a new Diet Order form for the 2022 - 2023 school year. Diet Orders will remain in effect perpetually until School Nutrition receives written or verbal authorization from a recognized medical authority or parent/guardian to terminate the Diet Order.

9. Water Availability During Lunch Meal Service

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act), Public Law 111-296, establishes a requirement for making water available to children in all school meal programs. Drinking water **must** be made available to students at no charge and without restriction in place where meals are served. To ensure water availability during meal service, each school’s Principal must choose one of the following options:

- Allow students to access water fountains in the dining room or an adjacent area.
- Request a water cooler with disposable water cups which are supplied by School Nutrition and maintained by Cafeteria staff.