

INDEPENDENCE CHARTER SCHOOL 2011-2012 SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

- Children need healthy meals to learn. Independence Charter School offers healthy meals every school day. The full price cost for breakfast is \$1.25; the full price cost for lunch is \$2.30. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is 30 cents for breakfast and 40 cents for lunch.
- Last year's meal cards **can NOT** be used for the 2011-2012 school year. All students will be receiving a 2011-2012 meal card on the first day of school. **All students are required to wear their meal card lanyard to school every day, whether or not they get meals at school.** This is required because almost every ICS student gets meals at least occasionally at ICS and loses valuable meal time if they need to go through the process of getting a temporary card.
- Families who complete the 2011-2012 meal application can contact Tr. Neyza via e-mail or phone to get a verbal determination of their children's meal status for 2011-2012. Please note that ICS has 10 business days to review applications.
- Payments need to be made in cash or by money order (checks are NOT accepted) when you send them with your child any day of the school (checks are NOT accepted) it must be in a sealed envelope with the child's first and last name, date and amount enclosed. (Please do not send more than \$20 at a time). Payments will be credited to your child's account within 24 hours (not on the morning you send in the payment). You also have the option to pay on-line with a credit card (see instructions below).
- If you don't want your child to participate from the School Meal Program at all, please contact Tr. Neyza immediately to place a "RESTRICTION" on the child's meal card.
- If you are unsure of your child's meal payment status or account balance information now or at any time during the school year, check on-line or contact Tr. Neyza at neyza@icscharter.com or 215-238-8000 ext 2228.
- The price of a la carte items will be 75 cents each. Students can only purchase a la carte items with cash (meal cards cannot be used for these purchases).
- **Students with negative meal account balances of over \$5 will not be able to purchase school meals.**
- Parents are responsible to stay informed about their children's meal account balances. Parents can look on-line or contact Tr. Neyza on any school day at neyza@icscharter.com or 215-238-8000 ext 2228.

ACCESSING YOUR CHILD'S ICS MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCE And TRANSACTION HISTORY

NOTE: If you are new to ICS and do not know your child's Philadelphia School District identification number, contact Tr. Megan at megans@icscharter.com to get the identification number. Parents will only be able to set up a portal account if ICS has your e-mail address in its data base.

There are two ways to access the LunchTime Portal via the Internet:

- Direct: <http://mms.icscharter.com/lunchtime/default.aspx>
- Indirect: Log into the MMS Parent Portal and click on 'View Cafeteria Account' (Parents new to ICS will be receiving information soon about how to create an MMS account)

To set up your LunchTime Portal Account:

- Click on 'Create An Account'.
- Key in your first name, last name, email address, and desired password.
- Click on Submit.

Use this email address and password to log into your LunchTime account.

The first time you log into your LunchTime account, you will need to add your child(ren) to the account:

- Click on 'To add kids to your account, please click HERE'.
- Key in your child's first and last names.
- If these names match what is in the LunchTime database (same info as enter in the MMS database), the child will be added to your account.

What is available in the LunchTime account?

- You can view your child's balance with the cafeteria.
- You can add money to your child's account via credit card
- You can view all meal transactions charged to your child's account.
- You can restrict a la carte purchases. However, this serves no purpose as all a la carte purchases are cash only. Thus, any restrictions you set have no effect on a la carte purchases.
- You can set up to have automated e-mails sent to you when your child's meal balance is getting low

If you try to access the system by using the e-mail I use for ICS, and get an error message, the issue is probably with your browser and its settings. Here are some suggestions:

- If you have the popup blocker enabled, disable it.
- If you have another browser installed, try using that browser.
- Or try this website address to skip directly to the create account page: <http://mms.icscharter.com/lunchtime/CreateAnAccount.aspx>

Try using Firefox or Safari as your browser. Other browsers, such as Chrome, may work, but are not guaranteed to work. When using these browsers, you need to turn off any pop-up blocker that is on. The functionality of these two portals makes use of pop-ups. If they are blocked, you will have problems getting into and navigating in these portals.

You are required to set up an account for each portal. Your MMS (parents who are new to ICS will receive information soon regarding setting up an MMS account) user name and password will not work with Lunch Time or vice versa (unless you had set it up this way). Setting up an account for MMS does not automatically allow you to log into Lunch Time and vice versa.

MEAL CARD POLICY FOR 2011-2012

All students MUST wear the meal-card lanyards at all times while at school. If your child does not participate of the school meal program, please let Tr. Neyza know so she can place a "restriction" in this meal card. If your child loses his meal card, the parent needs to contact Tr. Neyza immediately to request a replacement card. During the time when the card is being requested and the time the meal card is given to the child, that child will be able to get a "temporary daily meal-pass" to be able to purchase a meal. If this happens more than once during the school year, the family will need to pay \$2 for a replacement meal card.

No meal will be served if a child does not have a meal card **OR** if a student's meal account is over the allowable negative balance (-\$5), the child will be given cereal for lunch (at no charge) if this happens.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Teacher Neyza

2011-2012 FREE/REDUCED-PRICED MEAL APPLICATION

If you are applying to find out if your child/ren is eligible for Free or Reduced-Priced school meals for 2011-2012, be sure to return the submit your application as soon as possible. You only need to submit **ONE APPLICATION PER HOUSEHOLD**. However, if you have children in multiple schools, you need to complete the application for each school. You can submit the paper application (which is enclosed in this packet) **OR** you can complete the application on-line through the Pennsylvania COMPASS website (www.compass.state.pa.us). If you submit the paper copy, ICS has 10 business days in which to review the application. If you submit the application via COMPASS, ICS will be notified of the your child's payment status via e-mail from COMPASS within a day of your completing the application.

If your child is new to ICS this year (*whether or not his sibling attended ICS last year*), your child will need to pay full price for school meals until you complete a 2011-2012 application and get a payment status update from ICS.

If your child attended ICS in 2010-2011 and had a Free or Reduced-priced payment status, s/he will have last year's payment status until mid-October or when you submit a completed a 2011-2012 application (whichever comes first). You must return a 2011-2012 application no later than **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5th 2011** in order to get a payment status for 2011-2012. **If you do not submit a completed application by that time, your child will need to start paying full-price for meals.**

A determination notice of approval/denial will be sent to you after your family's application is reviewed.

Contact Tr. Neyza (after August 30th) at neyzac@icscharter.com or 215-238-8000 x2228 if you have any questions.

QUESTIONS REGARDING A MEAL APPLICATION FOR 2011-2012

1. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced price meals. *Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: **Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator.** Families can also apply online for free or reduced school meals, and other assistance benefits, at www.compass.state.pa.us
2. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD? You must include all those living in your household, related or not, who share income and expenses.
3. WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS? All children in households receiving benefits from **Pennsylvania SNAP** or **Pennsylvania TANF**, can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household's gross income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
4. CAN FOSTER CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Yes, foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income and should be included on the household application. They are no longer considered a household of one.
5. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS? Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator at 215-238-8000 ext 2228 or e-mail: neyzac@icscharter.com if you have questions.
6. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE? Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first 30 operating days of this school year. You must send in a new application by **October 5th 2011** unless the school told you that your child has been directly certified for free meals for the new school year.
7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.
8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes, and we may also ask you to send written proof.
9. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator** at 215-238-8000 ext 2228 or e-mail: neyzac@icscharter.com
11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
13. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE INCLUDE OUR HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS INCOME? If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
14. MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS HER COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME? No, if the combat pay is received in addition to her basic pay because of her deployment and it wasn't received before she was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your school for more information.
15. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for **Pennsylvania SNAP** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-692-7462 (1-800-451-5886 TDD number for individuals with hearing impairments).

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012

| Household size | Yearly | Monthly | Weekly |
|-------------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| 1 | \$20,147 | \$1,679 | \$ 388 |
| 2 | \$27,214 | \$2,268 | \$ 524 |
| 3 | \$34,281 | \$2,857 | \$ 660 |
| 4 | \$41,348 | \$3,446 | \$ 796 |
| 5 | \$48,415 | \$4,035 | \$ 932 |
| 6 | \$55,482 | \$4,624 | \$1,067 |
| 7 | \$62,549 | \$5,213 | \$1,203 |
| 8 | \$69,616 | \$5,802 | \$1,339 |
| Each additional person: | +\$7,067 | +\$589 | +\$136 |

Your children may qualify for reduced price or free meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

Sincerely,

Tr. Neyza Cabrera, Meal Coordinator

Privacy Act Statement: This explains how we will use the information you give us.

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

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 Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING

A HOUSEHOLD MEMBER IS ANY CHILD OR ADULT LIVING WITH YOU.

IF NO ONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD GETS Pennsylvania SNAP OR Pennsylvania TANF BENEFITS AND IF ANY CHILD IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS HOMELESS, A MIGRANT OR RUNAWAY, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Part 1: Skip this part.

Part 2: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway, check the appropriate box and call Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator at 215-238-8000 ext 2228.

Part 3: Complete child's name, grade and school the child attends only if a child in your household is eligible under Part 1. Complete entire section if Part 1 was skipped.

Part 4: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are not necessary if you didn't need to fill in Part 3.

Part 5: Answer this question if you choose.

IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A FOSTER CHILD, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

If all children in the household are foster children:

Part 1: Skip this part.

Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: List all foster children and the name of school each child attends. Check the box indicating the child is a foster child. Include the grade of the school aged child.

Part 4: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are **not** necessary.

Part 5: Answer this question if you choose.

If some of the children in the household are foster children:

Part 1: If the household does not have a case number, skip this part.

Part 2: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway, check the appropriate box and call Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator at 215-238-8000 ext 2228. If not, skip this part.

Part 3: Follow these instructions to report total household income from this month or last month.

- **Box 1—Name:** List all household members and the name of school for each child. For any person, including children, with no income, you must check the "No Income" box. Check the box if the child is a foster child. Include the income for the household members who have income. Include the grade of the school aged child.
- **Box 2—Gross Income and How Often It Was Received:** For each household member, list each type of income received for the month. You must tell us how often the money is received—weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly. For earnings, be sure to list the **gross income**, not the take-home pay. Gross income is the amount earned *before* taxes and other deductions. You should be able to find it on your pay stub or your employer can tell you. For other income, list the amount each person got for the month from welfare, child support, alimony, pensions, retirement, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), and disability benefits. Under *All Other Income*, list Worker's Compensation, unemployment or strike benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household, and any other income. Do not include income from SNAP, FDPIR, WIC, Federal education benefits and foster payments received by the family from the placing agency. For **ONLY** the self-employed, under *Earnings from Work*, report income after expenses (NET income). This is for your business, farm, or rental property. If you are in the Military Privatized Housing Initiative or get combat pay, do not include these allowances as income.

Part 4: Adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if s/he doesn't have one).

Part 5: Answer this question, if you choose.

ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS, INCLUDING WIC HOUSEHOLDS, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Part 1: If the household does not have a case number, skip this part.

Part 2: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway, check the appropriate box and call Tr. Neyza Cabrera, meal coordinator at 215-238-8000 ext 2228. If not, skip this part.

Part 3: Follow these instructions to report total household income from this month or last month.

- **Box 1—Name:** List all household members and the name of school for each child. For any person, including children, with no income, you must check the "No Income" box. Include the grade of the school aged child.
- **Box 2—Gross Income and How Often It Was Received:** For each household member, list each type of income received for the month. You must tell us how often the money is received—weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly. For earnings, be sure to list the **gross income**, not the take-home pay. Gross income is the amount earned *before* taxes and other deductions. You should be able to find it on your pay stub or your employer can tell you. For other income, list the amount each person got for the month from welfare, child support, alimony, pensions, retirement, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), and disability benefits. Under *All Other Income*, list Worker's Compensation, unemployment or strike benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household, and any other income. Do not include income from SNAP, FDPIR, WIC, Federal education benefits and foster payments received by the family from the placing agency. For **ONLY** the self-employed, under *Earnings from Work*, report income after expenses (NET income). This is for your business, farm, or rental property. Do not include income from SNAP, FDPIR, WIC or Federal education benefits. If you are in the Military Privatized Housing Initiative or get combat pay, do not include these allowances as income.

Part 4: Adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if s/he doesn't have one).

Part 5: Answer this question if you choose.

