

Blooming Prairie Public Schools

Independent School District No. 756

202 4th Avenue NW

Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

High School/Intermediate School Phone: 507-583-4426; Fax: 507-904-7618

Elementary School Phone: 507-583-6615; Fax: 507-904-7618

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school offers healthy meals each day. All students can get one breakfast and one lunch free of charge each day at school. Although no application is required to receive this free meal benefit, filling out the Application for Educational Benefits is still important! Your application may help the school qualify for education funds.

To apply, complete the enclosed Application for Educational Benefits and return it to:

Blooming Prairie Elementary School Office or

123 2nd St NW

Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

Blooming Prairie Intermediate/High School Office

202 4th Ave NW

Blooming Prairie, MN 5591

COMMON QUESTIONS:

Why should I fill out the Educational Benefits form when lunch is already free?

As children return to school, it's important to turn in your family's school meal application even though students don't need to apply to receive free breakfast and lunch every day at school through the Free School Meals Program. You need to complete a benefits application every year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture determines eligibility based on family size and income. Many are surprised to find out that they qualify, and turning in this application helps every child in the school. Strong participation in school breakfast and lunch helps to sustain our meal program including locally sourced foods. There are also many other benefits such as:

- Amount of grant money our school receives.
- Reduced fees for transportation, athletic programs, and academic or extracurricular activities.
- Education funds and discounts.
- Opportunity to provide free meals for all students in the Summer Food Program.
- Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity program.
- Waived fees for tests like the ACT and SAT.
- Scholarships and discounts.
- And much more!

Who should complete this application? Children in households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and foster, homeless, migrant and runaway children qualify without reporting household income. Alternatively, children can qualify if their household income is within the maximum income shown for their household size on the instructions.

I get WIC or Medical Assistance. Can my children qualify? Children in households participating in WIC or Medical Assistance do not automatically qualify. Children may be eligible depending on other household financial information. Please fill out an application.

Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are already approved for free meals? No, please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any of your children were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Tina Cisneros at 507-583-6615 or email tcisneros@blossoms.k12.mn.us.

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 the first few days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year.

Who should I include as household members? Include yourself and all other people living in the household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends).

May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen? Yes. You or your children do not have to be U.S. citizens for you to complete an application.

What if my income is not always the same? List the amount that you normally get. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get overtime only sometimes. For seasonal work, write in the total annual income.

What if some household members have no income to report? Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we assume you meant to do so.

Will the income information or case number I give be checked? It may be. We may also ask you to send written proof.

How will the information be kept? Information you provide on the form, and your child's approval, will be protected as private data. For more information, see the back page of the Application for Educational Benefits.

If I don't qualify now, may I apply later? Yes. Please complete an application at any time if your income goes down, your household size goes up, or you start getting SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR benefits.

How do I know if my children qualify as homeless, migrant or runaway? Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are there any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail your school social worker.

Do I need to fill out an application for each child? No. Use one Application for Educational Benefits for all students in your household.

If you have other questions or need help, call 507-583-6615 (Elementary) or 507-583-4426 (Intermediate/High School).

Sincerely,

Christopher Staloch, Superintendent

How to Complete the Application for Educational Benefits

Complete the Application for Educational Benefits form for school year 2025–26 if any of the following applies to your household:

- Any household member currently participates in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or
- The household includes one or more foster children (a welfare agency or court has legal responsibility for the child) or
- The total income of household members is within the guidelines shown below (**gross earnings before deductions**, not take-home pay). Do not include as income: foster care payments, federal education benefits, MFIP payments, or value of assistance received from SNAP, WIC, or FDPIR. Military: Do not include combat pay or assistance from the Military Privatized Housing Initiative. The income guidelines are effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Maximum Total Income

| Household size | \$ Per Year | \$ Per Month | \$ Twice Per Month | \$ Per 2 Weeks | \$ Per Week |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1 | 28,953 | 2,413 | 1,207 | 1,114 | 557 |
| 2 | 39,128 | 3,261 | 1,631 | 1,505 | 753 |
| 3 | 49,303 | 4,109 | 2,055 | 1,897 | 949 |
| 4 | 59,478 | 4,957 | 2,479 | 2,288 | 1,144 |
| 5 | 69,653 | 5,805 | 2,903 | 2,679 | 1,340 |
| 6 | 79,828 | 6,653 | 3,327 | 3,071 | 1,536 |
| 7 | 90,003 | 7,501 | 3,751 | 3,462 | 1,731 |
| 8 | 100,178 | 8,349 | 4,175 | 3,853 | 1,927 |
| Add for each additional person | 10,175 | 848 | 424 | 392 | 196 |

Step 1: Children

List all infants and children in the household, their school and grade if applicable, and birthdate. Attach an additional page if needed to list all children. Check the box if a child is in foster care (a welfare agency or court has legal responsibility for the child).

Step 2: Case Number

If any household member currently participates in SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR, write in the case number and then go to Step 4. If you do not participate in any of these programs, leave Step 2 blank and continue to Step 3.

Step 3: Adult and Child Incomes / Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number

- **Social Security Number/Total Household Members.** An adult household member must provide the last four digits of their Social Security number or check the box if they do not have a Social Security number. Report the total number of household members and ensure all household members are listed individually on the application in the child or adult section as applicable.
- **Child Income.** If any children in the household have regular income, such as SSI or part-time jobs, list the total amount of regular incomes received by all children, and check the box for the frequency: weekly, bi-weekly, twice a month, or monthly. Do not include occasional earnings like babysitting or lawn mowing.
- **Adult income.** Report the names of adult household members and income in this section.
 - List all adults living in the household not listed in Step 1, whether related or not, such as grandparents, relatives, or friends.
 - **Gross Earnings from Work.** This is usually the money received from working at jobs where a paycheck is received. For each income, check the box to show how often the income is received: weekly, bi-weekly, twice per month, or monthly.
 - List gross incomes before deductions, not take-home pay. Do not list an hourly wage rate. For adults with no income to report, enter a '0' or leave the section blank. For seasonal work, write in the total annual income.
 - **Are you Self-Employed or a Farmer?** List the net income per month or year after business expenses. Do not list the same income twice on the application. A loss from farm or self-employment must be listed as 0 income and does not reduce other income.
 - **Any Other Gross Income.** List gross incomes before deductions from all other sources, such as SSI, unemployment, child support, public assistance, social security, rental income or annuities.

Step 4: Signature and Contact Information An adult household member must sign the form. If you do not want your information to be shared with Minnesota Health Care Programs, check the "Don't share" box in Step 4.

Optional: Please provide the information on ethnicity and race that is requested on the second page of the form. This information is not required and does not affect eligibility. The information helps to ensure we are meeting civil rights requirements and fully serving our community.

2025–26 Application for Educational Benefits

Mail or return completed form to: **Blooming Prairie Public**

Schools

STEP 1: List ALL Household Members who are infants, children, and students up to and including grade 12 (if more spaces are required for additional names, attach another sheet of paper).

Definition: A Household Member is “Anyone living with you and shares income and expenses, even if not related.” Read *How to Complete the Application for Educational Benefits* for more information. Adults over grade 12 living in the same household should be reported in Step 3. If children in the household attend different districts or charter/nonpublic schools, return an application at each one.

| Child’s First Name (list all children in household) | MI | Child’s Last Name | School | Grade | Birthdate | Foster Child (v) |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------|--------|-------|-----------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

STEP 2: Do Any Household Members (including you) currently participate in one or more of the following assistance programs: SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR? Medical assistance **does not** qualify. If **NO** > Go to STEP 3.

If **YES** >Enter SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR Case Number (between 4-9 digits, do not report EBT card number) _____ then go to STEP 4 (**Do not complete STEP 3**)

STEP 3: Report Income for ALL Household Members (Skip this step if you answered ‘Yes’ to STEP 2)

A. Last Four Digits of Social Security Number (SSN) of Adult Household Member: XXX-XX- Or Check if Adult has **No SSN**: **Total Number of All Household Members** (Children + Adults)

B. Child Income.

Sometimes children in the household earn or receive income, such as from a part time job or SSI. Please include the TOTAL income received by all children listed in STEP 1. Do not include income received by adults in the box to the right.

| Total Income Received by All Children | Weekly | Bi-weekly | 2x Month | Monthly |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| \$ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

C. All Adult Household Members (including yourself). For each Household Member listed, if they do receive income, report total gross income only. If they do not receive income from any source, write ‘0’ or leave any fields blank. You are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. Not sure what income to include here? Flip the page and review “Sources of Income” for information. “Sources of Income” will help you with the Child Income section and All Adult Household Members section.

| Names of All Adult Household Members (First and Last) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| List all Household members not listed in STEP 1 (including yourself) even if they do not receive income. Include children who are temporarily away at school or in college. |
| |
| |
| |
| |

| Gross Earnings from Working at Jobs | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Weekly | Bi-weekly | 2x Month | Monthly | Report income before deductions or taxes in whole dollars (no cents). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |

| Are you Self-Employed or a Farmer? | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monthly | Yearly | Net income from Farm or Self-Employment. Do not duplicate elsewhere. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |

| Any Other Gross Income | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Weekly | Bi-weekly | 2x Month | Monthly | SSI, Unemployment, Public Assistance, Child Support, and others on Page 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$ |

STEP 4: Contact information and adult signature. “I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws.”

I have checked this box if I *do not* want my information shared with Minnesota Health Care Program as allowed by state law.

Printed name of adult signing form _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address (if available) _____ Apt# _____ City _____ Zip _____

SIGN HERE: Signature of Household Adult _____ **Date** _____

OPTIONAL: Children’s Racial and Ethnic Identities

We are required to ask for information about your children’s race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children’s eligibility. Respond to both Step One, *Ethnicity* and Step Two, *Race*.

Step One: Ethnicity (check one): Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino

Step Two: Race (check one or more): American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian Black or African American Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander White

INSTRUCTIONS: Sources of Income

Sources of Income for Children

| Sources of Child Income | Examples |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earnings from work Social Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Disability payments b. Survivor’s benefits Income from person outside the household Income from any other source | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money A child receives regular income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust |

Sources of Income for Adults

| Earnings from Work | Public Assistance / Alimony / Child Support | All Other Income |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary, wages, cash bonuses (before deductions or taxes) Net income from self-employment (farm or business) If you are in the U.S. Military: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA or privatized housing allowances) b. Allowances for off-base housing, food and clothing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash Assistance from State or local government Supplemental Security Income Unemployment benefits Worker’s compensation Alimony payments Child support payments Veteran’s benefits Strike benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Security Disability benefits Regular income from trusts or estates Annuities Investment income Rental income Regular cash payments from outside household |

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that we use information from this application to see who qualifies for free or reduced price meals. We can only approve complete forms. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them deliver program benefits to your household. Inspectors and law enforcement may also use your information to make sure that program rules are met.

Please be sure to provide the last four numbers of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the adult does not have one, ‘Check if no Social Security Number.’ Applications for a foster child do not need to list a Social Security number. Applications for children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social Security number. Some children qualify for free meals without an application. Please contact your school to get free meals for a foster child, and children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway.

At public school districts and charter schools, each student’s eligibility status also is recorded on a statewide computer system used to report student data to MDE as required by state law.

| Do Not Fill Out: For School Office Use Conversions to Annualize All Income: | X52 | X26 | X24 | X12 | X1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Verified? Attach Tracker | No change <input type="checkbox"/> | Free After Verified <input type="checkbox"/> | Reduced After Verified <input type="checkbox"/> | Denied After Verified <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| | Weekly | Bi-weekly | 2X Month | Monthly | Annualize | Household Size: | Categorical Eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> | Free <input type="checkbox"/> | Reduced <input type="checkbox"/> | Denied <input type="checkbox"/> |
| All Total Income (Include child and adult income) | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Determining Official Signature: | | | | | | | Date: | | | |
| Confirming Official Signature: | | | | | | | Date: | | | |

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