



---

# PULASKI ACADEMY & CENTRAL SCHOOLS

---

**CHERYL MAXFIELD • DIRECTOR OF FOOD SERVICE**

August 10, 2024

Dear PACS Families,

We are happy to announce that our schools will continue to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) through the New York State Education Department for the 2024-2025 school year.

The CEP program allows all students who attend Lura M. Sharp Elementary or the Middle-High School to receive one complete breakfast and lunch per day at no charge during the upcoming school year. There will be a charge for extras such as ala carte items and additional milk, juice, or second meals.

We have attached a Household Income Verification Form that we ask all families to complete. This form is used to gather the data lost by not collecting free and reduced-price meal applications. Our eligibility for state aid, grants, and other funding sources rely on the collection of this information. If you need assistance filling out the form, please contact my office at the Middle-High School.

We've also included breakfast and lunch menus for September, a list of ala carte items, and information on the afterschool meal program. For additional information, please visit the Cafeteria page on the District website. If you have any questions about the Food Service Program, please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to welcoming your children to the cafeteria this fall.

Sincerely,

*Cheryl Maxfield*



## Some Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q. What is the CEP Program?

A. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a federal reimbursement option that allows for eligible schools to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students.

### Q. Why is the District requesting a Household Income Verification Form when meals are being offered to students at no charge?

A. Alternative income forms are collected in replacement of free and reduced-price meal applications. CEP allows schools to serve all students breakfast and lunch at no cost without collecting meal applications from families. However, schools still need data that was collected from the meal applications. This data is used to assess our number of students from low-income households for state aid, grants, and college application discounts purposes.

### Q. Why is Pulaski Academy and Central School now able to participate in the CEP program?

A. Our school is eligible to receive a funding provision that was included in this year's NYS budget. This additional state funding will allow for our school to provide meals to all students at no charge while alleviating the financial burden of subsidizing meal costs provided to every student regardless of income eligibility.

In addition, our schools meet the required Identified Student Percentage of 40 percent or higher. An Identified Student Percentage refers to any students that is directly certified for free meals because their household participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Medicaid, or are homeless, migrant, enrolled in Head Start or in foster care.

### Q. What are the benefits of CEP?

A. CEP allows schools to offer breakfast and lunch each school day to no cost to students. CEP also increases school meal participation by removing stigma, maximizes federal reimbursements, and eliminates unpaid school meal charges. Participating in school meals can save families time spent grocery shopping and meal prepping. School meals promote student health because they must meet nutrition guidelines set at the federal level by USDA.

### Q. What impact does the CEP Program have on school taxes?

A. There is no impact on school taxes. The PACS Food Service Department's budget is self-sustaining and is separate from the annual school budget voted on by taxpayers each year.

### Q. What if I have questions about the form I need to fill out for my children?

A. Please contact Cheryl Maxfield, Director of Food Service at 315-298-5103 to assist you with any questions or paperwork.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**  
[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)