

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Frank O’Gara or Elaine Kanellis

Voice: (703) 588-3260 or (703) 588-3265

Email: frank.o’gara@hq.dodea.edu

elaine.kanellis@hq.dodea.edu

New Eligibility Guidelines Announced For Free/Reduced School Lunches

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA - The Department of Defense Education Activity is encouraging families of children attending its overseas schools to reapply for free and reduced price school lunches. Earlier this year, DoDEA requested an increase in the reimbursement rate USDA provides for school lunches. The USDA approved the request and also authorized the use of the Alaska Income Eligibility Guidelines in qualifying families to participate in the program. As a result, more families may qualify under the new guidelines.

This change applies to families of children attending DoDEA schools overseas in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Azores, Turkey, Korea, Japan, and Okinawa. It does not include families of children attending DoDEA schools in Puerto Rico or Guam who fall under their State Department of Education programs.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM), and Marine Corps Community Services are designated School Food Authorities (SFAs) for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) overseas. AAFES is the largest SFA, providing United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved school meals to students located on Army and Air Force Installations in nine countries throughout Europe and the Pacific. NEXCOM and the Marine Corps Community Services also operate similar programs overseas.

The school lunch program is designed to meet federal requirements for nutritionally balanced meals and to offer free or reduced price lunch and breakfast (where available) to eligible children.

Families can apply for eligibility to participate in the free and reduced price school lunch program by completing an application available at their installation. Installation commanders operate and maintain the program by providing instructions on how to apply for the program; determining eligibility of applicants and maintaining and updating a list of students enrolled in the program.

The point of contact at DoDEA for the School Lunch Program is Karen Smith at (703) 588-3532.