

## How do children qualify for free and reduced-price meals?

**Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.**

Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents for lunch and 30 cents for breakfast.

Children from families with income over 185 percent of poverty pay a full price, though their meals are still subsidized to some extent. Local school food authorities set their own prices for full-price meals, but most operate their meal services as non-profit programs.

As the administering agency, the Department of Education reviews and monitors the School Lunch and Breakfast Program, and the Afterschool Snack Program within the state and brings about corrective action in instances where federal regulations are not being followed.



**This brochure provides general information and is not all-inclusive.**

For specific requirements regarding program participation, please contact the **School Nutrition Program Office:**

5163 Gordon Persons Building  
Post Office Box 302101  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101

Telephone: 334.242.8228

FAX: 334.353.5674

[www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu)

(Go to Offices, then CNP-Child Nutrition Program)



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# National School Lunch Program

# School Breakfast Program

and

# Afterschool Snack Program

# 2014

# What is the National School Lunch Program?

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in nearly 101,000 public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions in the US. In the year 2014, over 85,973,499 lunches were served with over 746,204 children enrolled.

In signing the 1946 National School Lunch Act, President Harry S. Truman said, *“Nothing is more important in our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare.”*

## How does NSLP work?

The Alabama Department of Education administers the National School Lunch Program. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides funding for the program through cash subsidies and donated commodities. In return, school districts and independent schools that choose to take part must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible children. Presently, 1,358 public schools, 19 private schools, and 40 residential care facilities participate in the NSLP in Alabama.

## How does NSLP help Alabama?

In 2014, Alabama received \$258,232,684.04 in cash payments. In addition to cash reimbursements, schools are entitled by law to receive commodity foods called “entitlement” foods. Schools can also get “bonus” commodities as they are available from surplus agricultural stocks. Alabama received \$24,481,642.26 in school year 2014 through the commodity program. Of that amount, \$2,506,539 was for fresh produce.

## What is the At-risk Meals Program?

The At-risk Afterschool Meals Program is a component of the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) that offers federal funding for a meal or snack to afterschool programs for children located in an eligible area. The program is designed for organizations that provide care and organized activities for children afterschool or on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the regular school year only. Afterschool meals were served at 115 sites with 1,064,337 total meals served.

## What is the School Breakfast Program?

Some 12.1 million children in more than 72,000 schools and institutions in the U.S. start their day with the School Breakfast Program (SBP), a Federal entitlement program that provides states with cash assistance for non-profit breakfast. In 2014, approximately 37,494,485 breakfasts were served to over 746,204 children throughout Alabama.

Teachers have reported that their students are more alert and perform better in class if they eat breakfast. Studies support the link between nutrition and cognitive development of children. Tufts University released the 1998 statement following a Massachusetts research project: “Children who participated in the SBP were shown to have significantly higher standardized achievement tests scores than eligible non-participants. Children getting school breakfast also had significantly reduced absence and tardiness rates.”

## What is the Afterschool Snack Program?

On October 31, 1998, President Clinton signed the *Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998*. This Act expanded the USDA’s National School Lunch Program to provide cash reimbursements for snacks served to children and youth in certain afterschool care programs. This Act demonstrates USDA’s commitment to supporting afterschool activities aimed at promoting the health and wellbeing of children and youth in our communities. In the year 2014, Alabama Child Nutrition Programs served 1,982,898 reimbursable snacks to children enrolled in afterschool tutorial programs.

## Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program

Approximately 2.9 million dollars was awarded to one hundred and eleven (111) Alabama schools to participate in the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. This program makes fruit and vegetable snacks available at no cost to all children in participating schools. The program began in 2002 as a pilot program in a small number of schools. It has since become a permanent program that was expanded to cover selected schools in all 50 States, as part of the 2008 Farm Bill.

