


## How to fill out the Free/Reduced Application:

We encourage EVERYONE to fill out the application. This does NOT affect the results of other school applications.

- *This information also helps families to qualify for other programs that are based off of the free/reduced meal benefits such as PEBT (summer rounds or any future rounds if that happens).*
- *Applications are important because they affect a variety of programs for our school including Title I funding.*

Your student(s) benefits from last year only carry over for 30 days into the new school year. You MUST reapply every year. New benefits are NOT retroactive. Approved application benefits will be applied as of the application submit date.

### Free/Reduced lunch application online steps:

1. Go to our school website: [syracuseartsacademy.org](http://syracuseartsacademy.org)
2. On the home page, on the red toolbar you will find the  'Aspire' button> click this to be redirected.
3. Type in your username and password.
  - If you have not set up your own username and password, then please click on request a username below the login box. You will need your student's ID number and birth date to proceed. ID numbers are located on school schedules and fee statements, or you can call the school and we will gladly look it up for you. The system will walk you through the steps to create your own Username and password to your student; they will have their own. Student permissions are different from those given to parents and guardians.
4. Select one of your students.
5. Click on the Free/Reduced Meal Application icon in the right-hand column above the Lunch Account Balance. The system will take you through the application process.  
Only one application needs to be completed per family.

6. If you have any questions regarding the application process you may contact our school, or email the Nutrition Director – April at: [aempey@saacharter.org](mailto:aempey@saacharter.org)

- Make sure to include ALL members of your family. Even non-SAA students. The benefits will only apply to your SAA student, but it is important for the application process to include everyone in your household.
- Ensure all your contact information is correct; address, email, name is very important to complete your application, and communicate your results.
- Entering income can be tricky.
  - If you are military you must include your housing stipend.
  - Do not guess or round your income. You must enter your GROSS income exactly as you see it on your pay stub.
  - The frequency of the pay is important. Bi-weekly = every other week / Twice a month = 2 set pay days during the month / Yearly should only be used in VERY rare situations. Putting the wrong frequency means your income is being calculated incorrectly. Please reach out with any questions.
  - All income for the household needs to be included.
  - Any unique situations feel free to email me for guidance.
- If you are receiving state benefits already there is a chance that the state will download the information for your benefits automatically. They are in the process of communicating this information to us. Once the information is downloaded I will send out letters of confirmation.
- Once you receive a letter with your application results – make sure ALL your SAA students are listed on the letter.
- You should receive a letter with your application results within 30 days of your application date. You will receive an email within 10 days with your application results.
- If you receive your results and feel there was a mistake please reach out to our Nutrition Director to go over the information that was entered into your application.
- If there is ever a change in your household income or an addition to your family you can reapply at any time throughout the school year.

*Paper copies are available upon request in the office.*

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*