

Plantation Oaks Elementary School



2017-2018
STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year at Plantation Oaks Elementary. We are excited to have each of you as part of the POE family and we're looking forward to providing our students with rich, engaging and meaningful learning opportunities every day.

Parents, we invite you to be a strong part of your child's education and an active partner with us here at POE. We are all working towards the same goal, and that is to ensure that each child has the support that he or she needs to be successful. Parents can participate during the school day through our volunteer program or at home by simply encouraging your student(s) to read, complete homework, and prepare for tests.

As we work together, communication will be key. Please visit our school's website (poe.oneclay.net) to access teachers' email addresses and/or classroom websites. If you'd like to talk to a teacher via phone, simply send in a note or call the school. (Calls will be sent to the teacher's voicemail during instructional time.) If the issue needs further attention, please contact one of the guidance counselors or an administrator.

Attendance plays a very big role in student achievement. Please note our hours below and help us promote being here on time every day, ready to learn.

School Hours

Cafeteria Opens:	8:00 a.m.
First Bell:	8:20 a.m.
Tardy Bell:	8:30 a.m.
Dismissal:	2:42 p.m.

Thank you for reviewing the material in this handbook with your student(s). It's going to be a great year to be a POE Hawk and I am looking forward to working with you and your student(s).

Sincerely,
Jennifer Roach
Principal

Attendance

Research shows that the single greatest factor contributing to student achievement is school attendance. The School District of Clay County takes pride in offering quality education to all students, and believes that regular school attendance is a very important part of educational success. Although missed school assignments can be made up, missed instruction cannot.

Florida Law requires all children between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend school regularly. Students between the ages of 16 and 18 (with certain exemptions outlined in F.S. 1003.21) are exempt only if the parent has signed an ***Intent to Withdraw Form***. We encourage you to monitor your child's attendance, and contact us with any questions or concerns. School attendance can be followed by checking a student's interim reports and/or report cards or when in doubt, a parent/guardian can always call the school to check on present or past attendance.

If excused absences become excessive, medical documentation may be required by the principal to excuse further absences. If your child has a chronic medical condition that may lead to his/her absence from school on a regular basis, a doctor's statement is required.

Students with 5 or more unexcused absences in a month or 10 unexcused absences in 90 calendar days must be referred to the school's Attendance Team. The school will attempt to set up a meeting with the parent or guardian to try to resolve the attendance problem. When a parent or guardian does not participate in activities requested by the school to improve school attendance, legal action may result in the filing of a Truancy Petition with the court or referral to the State Attorney's Office (F.S. 1003.24).

Additionally, students beginning at age 14 may lose their future or current driving privileges for excessive unexcused absences. Students who are habitually truant will have their driving privilege taken away until they attend school for 30 days without unexcused absences. To be habitually truant means that a student has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days. (F.S. 1003.27).

Learnfare (formerly known as AFDC) requires children of cash assistance recipients to attend school regularly or they risk having their cash assistance reduced.

The following policies regarding attendance are in effect county-wide:

- Schools will contact a parent or guardian, through an automated recording to notify them of an absence.
- Following an absence, a note must be received from the parent or guardian no later than the 3rd day following return to school. Notes will not be accepted after the 3rd day and the absences will be considered unexcused.
- It is at the discretion of the principal whether absences for family emergencies or extended absences are considered excused or unexcused.

➤ **Attendance Recognition**

Perfect Attendance is earned quarterly by students who have been neither absent, tardy, nor are checked out before 11:30 AM (S.B. 4.02 G.). Students having no absences or tardies for the entire school year will be recognized at the end of the year.

➤ **Excused Absences**

Absences may be excused when it is due to personal illness of the student, serious illness or death in the immediate family, or if conditions exist making school attendance impossible or hazardous to health and safety.

Absences may also be excused when, in the opinion of the principal, the absence is to the educational advantage of the student. Absences may be authorized to observe special and recognized holidays of a student's faith. All other reasons shall be considered unexcused.

➤ **Make-Up Work**

Students are required to make up work missed due to **excused absences**. Students will be given a reasonable length of time to make up work, three days plus one day for each additional day's absence. Students are responsible for contacting teachers for make-up work. Parents are encouraged to request assignments if they know their child will be out for an extended length of time. **24 hours advance notice is required for requested work packets.**

For pre-arranged absences, all assignments will be given prior to the time of absence and will be due on the day the student is to return to school. The teachers will not be able to repeat in-class demonstrations, lectures, and instruction. Tests will be made up at the teacher's convenience.

➤ **Student Check-Out**

Students are expected to remain at school until 2:42 p.m. When students leave early, they miss valuable instructional time.

Parents are asked not to check out their child early except for emergencies. It is our policy that there are no student check-outs after 2:00PM. The student will remain in the classroom until the parent arrives to check him/her out. Parents/Guardians must check students out from the office. **Students will NOT be checked out from the classrooms.**

➤ **Tardies**

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. (the tardy bell) must get a pass and will be marked tardy. Tardies are not reflected as excused or unexcused, absence; however, they do impact perfect attendance.

Cell Phones (or Similar Devices)

Use of electronic devices by any student while on school property is not permitted. This includes cell phones and watches with cell phone capability, personal music and video recording/playing devices. If found in use, the item will be confiscated and held until a parent picks it up. Students may be assigned detention or ISS for this offense. Repeat offenders will be required to leave their phone in the front office.

Check Policy

Your check is welcome! We accept checks under the following conditions:

- If your check is returned or rejected for any reason, you expressly authorize your account to be electronically debited for the amount of the check plus a processing fee of \$25.00 or the maximum amount allowed by law.
- Until payment is satisfied your child may not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.
- No checks will be accepted after April 21, 2017 for Year -end closing.

The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgment and acceptance of these policies, terms and conditions.

Clinic

The clinic is located in the front office and is staffed with a full-time R.N. or a Health Assistant. The nurse will give children the medical attention that is allowed under county health policies. However, if a child has a high temperature or is clearly ill, the parent will be called to take the child home. A sick child should not be left in the clinic for more than thirty minutes. If a student is checked out from the clinic due to fever or vomiting, students must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours **without** medications before they can return to school.

Each year a Medical Emergency Card should be on file for each student listing other adults authorized by the parent to take the child home when the parent cannot be reached.

AN EMERGENCY CONTACT MUST BE AVAILABLE. At least one phone number of parent or guardian must be provided.

➤ **Infectious Disease Control Procedures:**

In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases, the Clay County School District follows the recommendations provided by the Florida Department of Health and the Clay County Health Department.

➤ **Medicine:**

Children will not be allowed to take medicine at school without a written statement from the parent including the following information:

- Medicine MUST be in the ORIGINAL Container, whether it is prescription or over the counter.
- The name of the medicine.
- The amount of the dosage.
- The time it is to be administered.
- The purpose of the medication.

All medication, including cough drops, aspirin, etc. must be brought by an adult to the clinic.

Code of Conduct

The Clay County School Board has adopted a Code of Student Conduct. It can be accessed on the Clay County website.

It is the responsibility of the parent and child to become familiar with the Code of Conduct. The parent and student acknowledgment form is to be completed and returned to the child's teacher.

Conferences

It is important that the parent, student and teacher work as a team in the educational process. It is best to schedule a conference before coming to school to ensure there will not be a conflict with another scheduled activity. Conferences will be held only with legal parent(s) and/or guardian(s). To schedule a conference, please call or email your child's teacher.

Counselors

Guidance counselors are available to the students, teachers, and parents for educational related problems. The counselors coordinate testing, and assist with referrals, staffing and reviews for ESE programs. The counselor may also conduct individual, small group and classroom guidance activities.

Dress Code

Plantation Oaks Elementary seeks to maintain an orderly environment. To accomplish this we have set a standard of student dress that is conducive to a proper educational climate. Clothing worn by students shall be neat, clean, and in good repair for the general personal health and safety of the student. Appearance that distracts, interferes, or creates classroom or school disorder or disrupts the learning process will not be allowed. Students who come to school dressed inappropriately will be held in the office until parents can bring appropriate clothing for them to change into. **Additional attire NOT ALLOWED includes (but is not limited to):**

- Hats, caps, sweatbands, visors or bandanas **
- Lengthy belts or chains that hang down
- Any item with gang or drug symbols
- Any item that advertises drugs, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, sexual images or language
- Short skirts and shorts (bottom of hem must reach fingertips of extended arms)
- See-through items
- Tight or revealing clothing
- Bare midriffs or crop tops
- Spaghetti straps, halters & strapless shirts
- Underwear showing
- Flip flops, backless shoes, high heels or "Heeleys"
- Baggy or loose fitting pants (must be belted and kept at the waistline)
- Leggings worn as pants (may only be worn under appropriate length clothing)
- Jeans with holes above the knee

Sturdy shoes or sneakers **are** necessary for safety during physical education and/or structured recess.

*** Hats, caps, visors and sunglasses may be worn during P.E. & structured recess.*

The Administration has the authority to make the final determination related to school dress code issues, and also reserves the right to establish rules during the school year regarding new fashion in dress.

Email

Teachers and parents may communicate via email only if an Email Consent Form is on file. Consent forms can be provided at the time of registration or upon request and must be signed in the presence of a school board employee. Please note, it is not possible to discuss a student by name or give personal information regarding a child. Email should be used for general communications. District policy does not allow teachers to discuss grades, behavior or health issues via e-mail. A parent having specific questions in regards to their child should contact the teacher by phone or schedule a conference.

Employee Feedback

Annually, every parent and student has the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional employees by completing annual school improvement climate surveys. Additionally, parents and students may submit concerns or commendations relative to performance directly to the school principal or supervisor. Results are reviewed by school administration and assist supervisors in recognizing performance or identifying growth opportunities.

Grades and Report Cards

Report cards will reflect each child's current level of mastery of appropriate educational expectations and standards. Grades for report cards will be entered into the district records program. Grades may be obtained electronically at any time through the Parent Portal in Focus. Please make sure you sign up to access the Parent Portal in the front office.

Homework

Students may be assigned a reasonable amount of homework. It will be an appropriate extension of class work. Students should assume the majority of the responsibility for completing homework assignments.

We encourage parents to promote a positive attitude toward homework, to provide a consistent time and place for study, to assist with drills, and to ensure assignments are completed. Parents can help by reading with their child each night.

Honor Roll Guidelines

Honor Roll is only for grades 3-5. To be eligible for Honor Roll, students must be working on grade level. Conduct grades do not count towards Honor Roll.

➤ All "A" Honor Roll:

The All "A" Honor Roll requires students to have A's in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science/Health, and Social Studies.

➤ "A/B" Honor Roll:

The 'A/B' Honor Roll requires students to have all A's and/or B's in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science/Health.

Grades K, 1 and 2 recognize academic success in various ways.

Identification Cards

Each student in attendance will be provided one identification card. If lost, a replacement may be purchased for \$5.00.

Insurance

Student insurance is available to those who wish to purchase it. Checks are made payable to the insurance company.

Items NOT Allowed on Campus

Items **NOT** Allowed on Campus (** indicates item requires permission - possession of these items will result in a discipline referral)

Alcohol	Gum
Animals	Chains
Balls**	Lighters/Matches
Tobacco Products	Toy Weapons
Fireworks	Lasers/Laser Pointers
Games/Toys**	Radios, CD/DVD, Cameras, mp3, etc**
Cards (playing and collectable)	Gun, knives and other weapons as defined by the CCSD Code of Conduct

Any item that disrupts the educational atmosphere, drugs, and/or counterfeit controlled substances medications (prescription and non-prescription) without clinic approval

Library

Use of books from the media center is strongly encouraged. The Media Center is open 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM on normal school days. Kindergarten students may check out one book at a time. First and Second graders may check out up to two books at a time. Three books will be allowed for the Third through Fifth grade students. Books may be checked out for two weeks at a time and renewed once if necessary. Lost or damaged books must be paid for before checking out additional books. Charges/fines are not assessed for books unless the book is damaged beyond repair. If the book is damaged beyond repair, or is lost, you will receive a note indicating the replacement cost. Students who do not pay for lost or damaged books will be given the choice between community services or exclusion from extracurricular activities as stated in Florida Statutes.

The Media Center is not only for your student's use, but parents as well. By simply stopping by the Media Center and creating a parent account, you will be able to check out books and audiobooks for your enjoyment at home.

You may also visit TumbleBooks Library at www.tumblebooks.com/library for an online collection of animated; talking picture books which teach young children the joys of reading in a format they'll love. You will need to login using the following: Login: poaks, Password: books.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's belongings in case they are lost. Children should check the lost and found, located in the hallway adjacent to the cafeteria. Unclaimed articles will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each nine week grading period.

Lunch and Breakfast Programs

Breakfast:

Student \$1.50, Adult \$2.00, Reduced \$.30

Breakfast is served on regular school days beginning at 8:00 a.m. Please **do not** have children at school before 8:00 a.m. **An express breakfast will be served on early dismissal days.** Breakfast will not be served after 8:15 a.m. to anyone, but bus riders.

Lunch:

Student \$2.00, Adult \$3.00, Reduced \$.40

A well-balanced, hot lunch is available for purchase each day, or a lunch may be brought from home. **Carbonated beverages are not permitted during lunchtime.** Please refrain from sending these items to school. **Lunch is not served on early dismissal days.**

All students are urged to participate in the hot lunch program. Whenever possible, please pre-pay by the week, month or beyond.

All lunch money should be turned into the homeroom teacher in the morning and it will be sent directly to the cafeteria. If the student has to borrow money a slip of paper with lunch account information will be sent home.

Students with no lunch money will be given a cheese sandwich, a fruit or vegetable and milk. This policy is subject to change.

Checks should be made payable to POE Cafeteria OR you can pay ONLINE at myschoolbucks.com.

➤ **Free/Reduced Breakfast & Lunch**

Applications for free and reduced lunches are distributed by the school; however, the Federal Government determines the family income that makes a student eligible. All parents are encouraged to complete an application. A new application form must be filled out each year. One form is used for all children in the family. Random and selected forms are audited each year and may result in the termination of these lunch privileges if the information is found to be invalid. If your children received free or reduced lunch last year in Clay County, they will maintain that status until a new application is filed for only 30 days after school opens.

➤ **Clay County does not have a charge program.**

If you do not have money for your child's lunch on a given day, please make him/her bring a home lunch.

Metal Detectors

To protect the health, welfare, safety and lives of students, faculty, staff and visitors to Clay County Schools, and to enforce provisions of the *Code of Student Conduct*, hand-held metal detectors may be used to scan and screen for firearms, knives and other metallic weapons.

Parties/Celebrations

Clay County School board policy places a limit of two parties per year. Other parties or social functions held during the school day require principal's approval. Due to allergies, food items (including cupcakes) **must** be coordinated with the classroom teacher 72 hours in advance. Parents may purchase a book in honor of a child's birthday. The media center will label the donation with the student's name and shelve it. Flowers, gifts etc. **will not** be delivered to classrooms. **Balloons are not allowed on campus or buses.** Discipline referrals may result in the loss of participation in parties/celebrations.

Field Trips

Field trips that enhance a student's educational experience and support the grade level curriculum may be offered. Any persons selected to chaperone a field trip will need to fill out a volunteer form at least one week prior to the trip. Discipline referrals may result in the loss of participation in field trips.

Physical Education

Plantation Oaks Elementary is fortunate to offer an excellent P.E. program with many extra curricular opportunities. Students who, because of illness or injury, are temporarily (1 to 3 days) unable to participate in physical education activities must present a note each time from their parent to the PE teacher explaining the problem.

Students who need to be excused from activities for a week or more must provide a doctor's excuse. If your child has any permanent physical restrictions or disabilities, please present a note from your child's doctor detailing the conditions and what the PE teacher may expect the child to be able to do.

Planners/Tuesday Folders

A student planner is used in grades 2 – 5. It provides important information concerning school procedures, rules, and policies. It also allows greater communication between home and school on a daily basis. The planner goes home every day and parents should sign it each night. Please take time to read over all the information contained in this handbook with your child. Each 2nd through 5th grade student may purchase a planner from the front office for \$4.00 (while supplies last). Every Kindergarten through 5th grade student will be provided a Tuesday Folder. If it is lost, students may purchase a replacement folder for \$3.00.

Progression Through the Grades

Students who meet required academic standards are promoted to the next grade level at the end of the school year. Promotion will be marked on the last report card of the school year. Students not meeting academic standards will be retained unless there is good cause to promote the student. Teacher judgment is the key factor in the decision of promotion or retention.

According to FL. Statute 1008.25, any third grade student who is reading below grade level must show that the deficiency has been remedied by the end of grade 3.

Grade 3 students must score a Level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment test, Florida Standards Assessment (FSA), in reading to be promoted to 4th grade.

Right to Know

As a parent of a student at Plantation Oaks Elementary, you have the right to know the professional qualifications for the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

*Whether the FL. Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.

*Whether the FL. Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.

*The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees.

*Whether any teacher aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

Requests for the above information must be made to the school administrators.

Spirit Day

Every Friday all students and staff are encouraged to wear their POE school shirts.

Teacher Requests

Due to the size of the school, parent requests for a certain teacher for their child cannot be accepted. The school carefully matches the child's instructional, emotional, and social needs with a teacher. Student placement is never a random act but rather a careful and professional process.

Telephones

Our telephones are for business and emergency use only. Students should make arrangements in advance concerning rainy day transportation, clubs, and other after school activities. Students or teachers will not be called to the telephone during school hours except in case of emergency. Parents are asked to contact teachers before or after the school day. Disruptions to the classroom reduce teaching and learning time.

Textbooks

Students will have textbooks assigned to them by their teacher. All textbooks need to be covered in order to keep the books in good condition. Students losing or damaging a book shall be required to pay for the book. Should a lost textbook that has been paid for be found, the money will be refunded.

Students are permitted to take their textbooks home if necessary.

Transportation

Supervision of students on the campus begins at 8:00 a.m. The first bell rings at 8:25 a.m., the tardy bell rings at 8:30 a.m. Since classroom instruction begins immediately, promptness is expected. The front car circle can be a busy place and your cooperation in driving safely and maintaining the traffic pattern is appreciated. Please ***do not*** park along the curb in the front car circle or in the bus area. **Any change in the way your child goes home from school must be in writing. Without a note, the student will be sent home their normal way.**

➤ Bikes-Skateboards-Scooters-Hoverboards

Bikes may be ridden by students and parked in the assigned areas. This is a privilege, and if abused, the right to ride a bike may be taken away. It is recommended that bikes be locked during school hours. By law, all children riding bikes are required to wear a bike helmet. Bikes are not to be ridden on sidewalks around the school at any time. County policy prohibits the riding of bikes, roller blades/skates, go-carts, scooters, and skateboards on any school board property. No motorized scooters will be allowed.

➤ **Bus Transportation**

We expect students who ride the school bus to be mannerly and well behaved in order for the driver to safely transport them to and from school. All students should be instructed by parents to follow the directions of the bus driver. Please review these safety rules with your child:

- Stand off the road while waiting for the bus.
- Enter and exit the bus in single file without pushing or shoving.
- Remain seated during the bus ride.
- Absolute silence is required when the light is on; talk quietly at other times.
- Do not put or throw anything outside bus windows.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Obey the bus driver at all times.
- Arrive early at the bus stop. The bus cannot wait.
- Use of profanity or obscene language is prohibited.
- Glass containers of any kind are not permitted on the bus.
- Balloons will not be allowed on the bus.

Students who abuse the privilege of riding the school bus by engaging in misconduct may be suspended from riding the bus. If such action becomes necessary, parents will be notified and will be responsible for providing transportation to and from school.

➤ **Request Permission to Ride School Buses**

Request for students to ride a school bus home with another student must be submitted in writing by BOTH parents and approved by a school administrator. This notice must be received 24 hours in advance and permission to ride the bus will be granted only if extra seats are available.

➤ **Car Riders**

Students who are transported to and from school by car need to be dropped off and picked up in the designated parent drop off line. **Students cannot be dropped off in the parking lot.** Please park and walk your child(ren) across the crosswalk. Students must be walked through all crosswalks in all parking lots to ensure their safety.

We appreciate you complying with our traffic patterns and speed limits. Please park only in the lots provided (no curb parking).

Students must be picked up at the designated dismissal time, unless participating in an approved after school event; parents are required to sign out any student still on campus after dismissal times. The school and/or the Clay County School Board cannot be held liable for any harm that may befall a student who arrives at school prior to the designated time of 8:00 a.m. or is not picked up from school on time.

A placard with the student names will be given to car riders to identify the students being picked up. This needs to be prominently displayed on the dashboard as the car enters the pick-up line. If students are identified as a car rider they will be walked to the car rider area from their classroom and will not be dismissed from this area to anyone not in a vehicle in the pick-up line. If someone wishes to get a student out of this area, check the student out in the office to verify that they are on the contact list and have photo identification.

➤ **Parent Pick-up**

Student will only be released to a person on their pick-up list that can provide a valid ID. Upon recognition or verification of ID from front office personnel, the student will be called to the front office for dismissal.

➤ **Walkers**

Designated walkers need to be identified as Whitfield side or flag pole side. Walkers on the Whitfield side will be dismissed out of the east side of the building and walkers on the flag pole side will be dismissed out the west side of the building.

➤ **Student Pick-Up**

Permission must be on file in the office if someone other than the parent or legal guardian is permitted to pick up a student. Anytime another person, not listed on the pickup list, will be picking up your child during the school day, we require a written note from you stating that this person has your permission to pick up your child. Please include the date and the expected time of dismissal. Parents are strongly encouraged not to pick-up their child before the established dismissal times.

Photo I.D. is required by all persons picking up a student. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Please note that if through the courts, a parent loses parental rights, we must have copies of the legal documents on file. Without copies of these documents on file, we cannot refuse to release a student to a natural parent.

Videotaping and Photographing

Many students may be filmed or photographed throughout the year for outstanding accomplishments. Videotapes may be aired on Clay Cablevision. In addition, some videos may be used at local, state, or national conferences or workshops. Photographs may be placed in the newspaper or on our school's website or Facebook page. Students may also have their work displayed on our district website, school newsletter or in local businesses, malls, or other public places. **Any parent objecting to their child's photo or work being publicly displayed must notify the school in writing within 48 hours of your child's enrollment.**

Visitors

In order to maintain the safety of all students, **ALL** visitors to the school campus **MUST** check in/out at the front office and get a visitors sticker in order to maintain the safety of all students. Children not enrolled in this school may not visit the classrooms during school hours.

Weather

During inclement weather (thunder, lightning or other) the following guidelines will be adhered to.

- Bus Riders will be dismissed when condition allow for a safe dismissal.
- Walkers & bike riders will be held until a parent arranges for them to be picked up or conditions improve to allow them to be dismissed.
- Car riders will be held indoors until weather conditions improve. When conditions allow, we will dismiss students utilizing our intercom system.
- In all cases, students will only be checked out to those on their pick-up list with a valid ID.

Withdrawals/Transfers

When planning to withdraw a student from the school, parents should notify the office and/or the teacher at least five (5) days in advance so that records and reports can be completed. All textbooks and library books must be returned or paid for prior to withdrawal.

Food and Nutrition Services-Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if my child forgets their lunch money?

The Food and Nutrition Services Department allows students to go into the negative if they forget their lunch money. We allow elementary students to go \$3.50 into the negative and secondary students \$4.50. If the negative balance exceeds the limit the school determines what the alternate meal will be.

We offer an online service called mySchoolBucks. It is free to set up an account. You may receive low balance notification, set-up automatic payments and view transactions/payments made to the account. There is a service fee for online payments made through this site. Cash or check payments can be made at the school at no charge. MySchoolBucks also offers a mobile app for your convenience.

What kind of restrictions can I place on my child's account?

You may either contact the Food and Nutrition Services Department or your school cafeteria to place restrictions on the account. We can add serving line notes such as "ala carte on Friday only". We can also limit the amount spent each day.

The cafeteria staff often tells my child to pick up a fruit or vegetable for the meal to be considered "reimbursable". Why?

In order for a meal to be considered "reimbursable" a student's tray must contain a certain number of components-bread, fruit, vegetable, milk, meat/meal alternate. If a cashier encourages a child to pick up an extra item it means he or she is missing a component to make the meal reimbursable (if not reimbursable it may cause the meal to cost more).

Free and Reduced Eligibility

Can a free and reduced application be filled out on line?

Yes. Applications can be completed in the convenience of your own home. This process is safe, secure and confidential. Online applications are transferred electronically to the FNS office. Eligibility is determined within 1 to 2 business days. If you have not received your eligibility notification in the mail you may call the FNS office to check the status.

Do I need to fill out a Free and Reduced Application for each child?

No. Use one Free and Reduced Application for all students in your household. If you are applying for a foster child check the box on the application indicating this application is for a foster child.

Who should I include as members of my household?

You must include all people living in your household, related or not.

How do I show my income if I only work 9 or 10 months?

You may project your annual income. The prior year's income may be used if it provides an accurate reflection of the household's current annual income.

Will the information I give be checked?

Yes, you may be asked to send written proof of your income or eligibility for Food Stamps or TANF at any time during the school year.

If I do not qualify now, may I apply later?

You may apply at any time during the school year if your household goes up in size or income goes down or if you start getting Food Stamps or TANF.

If I transfer from another District will my status carry over?

No. You will need to complete a new application for Clay County.

Will I be reimbursed for charges that were made against my account before the application was approved?

No. Money will need to be provided until notification of the approved status.

Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free meals?

Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. Call the Food and Nutrition Services Office at (904) 284-6534 if you have questions.

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 for the first few days of this school year. You must complete a new application unless you have received a letter saying your child is eligible for the new school year.

We are in the military. Do we include our housing allowances as income?

If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatized Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. For the purpose of determining household size, deployed service members are considered a part of the household. Families should include the names of the deployed service members on their application. Report only that portion of the deployed service member's income made available to them or on their behalf to the family. If combat pay is received, in addition to basic pay, because of deployment and it was not received before deployment, combat pay is not counted as income.

If you have any questions or need help, please call (904) 284-6534