

**EDUCATION BUREAU
CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 64/2021**

From :	Permanent Secretary for Education	To :	Supervisors and heads of government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme
Ref. :	EDB(ESP)/FLS/25/5/2(2)		
Date :	28 May 2021		

**Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students from Low-income Families
2021/22 School Year**

Summary

This circular memorandum invites the continued application of whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) for funding under the programme of Free Lunch at Schools in the 2021/22 school year.

Background

2. The Community Care Fund has launched the programme since the 2011/12 school year on a pilot basis to provide free lunch at schools for students in receipt of full grant under the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) Schemes in whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the DSS. Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the provision of free lunch at schools has been incorporated into the Government's regular assistance programme. The implementation details remain essentially the same as in the previous years and are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Details

Eligible Students

3. The funding will be disbursed to participating schools by the Education Bureau (EDB) direct. Participating schools should pay lunch expenses on behalf of Primary 1 to Primary 6 students meeting all of the following requirements:

- (i) receiving full grant under the SFA Schemes in the 2021/22 school year;
- (ii) studying in a whole-day government/aided primary school (including any of the special schools) or a primary school under the DSS; and
- (iii) having lunch arranged by the schools they attend¹.

4. As stated in paragraph 3, students eligible for the programme should also be recipients

¹ Schools have various modes of arranging lunch for students, e.g. selecting lunch suppliers for students in accordance with the guidelines on tendering and procurement or hiring staff to provide lunch for students, etc. Should students meeting the criteria stated in paragraphs 3(i) and (ii) bring their self-packed lunch to school, participating schools will not be provided with the funding for these students.

of full grant under the SFA Schemes. Schools are therefore invited to remind parents to submit applications for the SFA Schemes at their earliest convenience so that they can submit to the schools the Notification of Result for Assessment of Eligibility 2021/22 or Eligibility Certificate 2021/22 issued by the Student Finance Office of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency in a timely manner, and the schools can make payment for lunch expenses on behalf of eligible students. Since it is a common practice to make pre-payment for lunch expenses, to minimise enquiries from parents, we encourage schools to liaise with their lunch suppliers on pre-payment arrangements and refund arrangements to shorten the time between students' receipt of the above documentary proof and the pre-payment for lunch expenses. For details, please refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" on EDB webpage.

5. In response to the development of COVID-19, participating schools that need to make special arrangement during half-day schooling in the 2021/22 school year can refer to the circular letter dated 20 November 2020 and the "Frequently Asked Questions" on EDB webpage and act accordingly. For schools whose contract with the existing lunch supplier is about to expire, when selecting a prospective lunch supplier and preparing a new contract, they should take into account the above circumstance and review the contract terms to ensure the lunch supplier to be commissioned can continue to provide proper lunch service for eligible students on days with half-day schooling.

6. When considering lunch options, apart from requiring lunch suppliers to provide healthy, balanced and substantial meals, schools should request the offer of diversified food options to cater for students' individual needs (such as those out of health, religious or cultural reasons, etc.).

Disbursement and Accounting Arrangements

7. The funding will be disbursed to participating schools in two instalments. The first instalment in late August 2021 will be based on the estimated number of full grant recipients under the SFA Schemes of each school, and the daily lunch expenses and the number of days with school lunch arrangements as reported by the school in the Application Form. When disbursing the second instalment for non-government primary schools in late December (in April 2022 for government primary schools to tie in with the prevailing accounting arrangements), we will adjust the amount of provision according to the latest number of full grant recipients under the SFA Schemes in each school. Under special circumstances (such as the admission of additional eligible students in the middle of the school year), schools may initiate an application to EDB for further funding adjustment.

8. Participating schools should verify the balance of the funding received at the end of the school year. Surplus should not be carried forward to the next school year and must be returned to EDB, while deficit will be made up by EDB. Detailed arrangements will be announced under separate cover in June 2022. For audit purpose, schools are required to keep relevant receipts, which should indicate the amount of expenditure, the number of beneficiary students, the lunch expenses and the number of days with school lunch arrangements.

9. The funding provided for Free Lunch at Schools serves a specific purpose and participating schools should prepare a separate ledger for it. Aided primary schools and primary schools under the DSS should observe the requirements as stipulated in relevant circular memorandums and their annexes calling for submission of audited annual accounts to EDB for scrutiny. For government primary schools, the funding will be disbursed in the form of budget allocation. The expenditure should be charged to a specified account and should not exceed the allocation in the respective financial years.

Related Issues

10. To help schools cope with the additional administrative and clerical work arising from the implementation of various initiatives, in particular work relating to poverty alleviation (including the programme of Free Lunch at Schools), EDB has provided an additional recurrent cash grant equivalent to the salary of a Clerical Assistant for public sector primary schools since the 2014/15 school year. For details, please refer to [EDB Circular No. 10/2014](#).

Application

11. Schools are invited to complete the attached Application Form and return it to the Extended Support Programmes Section of EDB **on or before 28 June 2021**.

Enquiries

12. To facilitate schools in handling parents' enquiries, we have devised a set of "Frequently Asked Questions" in light of our implementation experience. For details, please visit EDB website (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/freelunch>). For enquiries, please contact the Extended Support Programmes Section of EDB at 2892 6659.

Benjamin YUNG
for Permanent Secretary for Education

encl.

c.c. Heads of sections – for information

APPLICATION FORM

(All whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme are requested to return this Application Form to the Education Bureau by fax or by post **on or before 28 June 2021**)

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
[Attn: Senior Education Officer (Extended Support Programmes)]
Education Bureau
Room 1141, 11/F, Wu Chung House
213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, HK
(Fax No.: 3107 1306)

Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students from Low-income Families 2021/22 School Year

My school **will /will not*** participate in the captioned programme (*please delete as appropriate). For participating schools, please complete Part A of the Application Form; for non-participating schools, please complete Part B.

Part A

My school will duly inform parents of the programme of Free Lunch at Schools, in particular the requirements for provision of free lunch at schools for eligible primary students as set out in Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 64/2021 and the special arrangement of lunch service applicable to days with half-day schooling. Details are as follows:

(Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box and fill in the required information.)

- (1) My school will adopt the following mode of arranging lunch for students at school:
- (i) My school has complied with the existing guidelines on tendering and procurement for the selection of lunch suppliers.
 - (ii) My school has hired staff to provide lunch for students.
 - (iii) Others (please specify: _____)
- (2) The price per lunch for a student in the 2021/22 school year is as follows (if different prices are charged for different groups of students, such as junior/senior primary or local/non-Chinese speaking students; quality low-risk lunch boxes provided for eligible students on days with half-day schooling due to COVID-19, please enter the respective prices; for standard pricing, please indicate the price as Price 1.):
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|----------------------------------------------------|---|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Price 1 (target students: _____) |) | HKD | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr></table> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Price 2 (target students: _____) |) | HKD | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr></table> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| * Price 3 (for days with half-day schooling _____) |) | HKD | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr></table> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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- (Please indicate the price stated in the contract with the lunch supplier or the price that parents are informed of under other modes of lunch arrangement.)
* Only applicable to circumstances when half-day schooling is implemented as announced by the Education Bureau.
- (3) The estimated number of days with provision of free lunch at schools (Note: the number of days with school lunch arrangements may be different from the number of school days):
- (i) from September 2021 to December 2021 (to March 2022 for government primary schools): _____ days; and
 - (ii) from January 2022 (from April 2022 for government primary schools) to July 2022: _____ days.

Part B

My school will NOT participate in the captioned programme. The main reason is as follows: _____

Signature of Supervisor: _____
Name of Supervisor: _____
Name of School: _____
School Code:

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Teacher/Staff-in-charge: _____
Telephone No.: _____
Fax No.: _____
Date: _____

