

## Free Summer Meals at Cove Creek School

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Free breakfast and lunch will be available to children and youth ages 18 and under at Cove Creek School on Mondays through Thursdays from June 16 through July 22. This summer feeding program will provide a free breakfast between 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. and a free lunch between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. for anyone 18 or under who comes to the school cafeteria accompanied by a parent or other adult.

Children must be transported to the site by a parent or guardian and the parent or guardian must remain with their children while they eat. Unattended children cannot be dropped off at the site and will not be served. The meals must be consumed on site at the school; "take out" orders are not available. Adults will not be able to purchase a meal but can bring one if they wish to eat with their children.

"We are very pleased to be able to offer this service to local families," said Superintendent Dr. David Fonseca. "It is a goal we have pursued for over a year, and now that we know Cove Creek will host a summer reading camp, we look forward to providing free meals there. We encourage families to take advantage of the program."

No application or approval process is required for children to receive free meals at Cove Creek. "All they need to do is show up with an adult, wash their hands, and go through the line to be served," said Child Nutrition Director Monica Adams.

Because Cove Creek is a Title I school, meaning that over 50% of students receive free or reduced price school meals, federal funds will reimburse the Watauga County Schools for meals served to children during the summer program. "The reimbursements are not enough to cover the costs of providing free meals as a separate service in schools, but they do make it possible to provide this service while summer reading camp is open," said Adams. "We are hoping the program will help a lot of children in families that can use a little assistance to keep everyone fed."

The summer reading camp at Cove Creek is for third graders receiving intensive reading instruction to help prepare them for fourth grade. A similar reading camp will operate at Hardin Park School but that site will only serve meals to children enrolled in the reading program. Hardin Park is not a Title I school and is therefore not eligible for federal funding for a summer feeding program. However, all students enrolled in the summer reading camp at Hardin Park will be eligible for free breakfast and lunch while attending the program.

The third graders who will attend summer reading camp in the Watauga County Schools will not be identified until near the end of the school year. Parents of third graders who should attend the reading camp will be notified by their child's school during the second week of June.