**The Sharing of School Meal**

**Eligibility Information**

Get the answers you need!

Dear Montezuma-Cortez School District families:

To clarify questions related to the sharing of your information when applying for free or reduced-price school meals, Montezuma-Cortez School District has prepared the following collection of frequently asked questions and answers.

**Q: What impact does undocumented or documented immigration or refugee status have on my child receiving free or reduced-price school meals?**

**A:** None. Public school districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program and/or the School Breakfast Program, like Montezuma-Cortez School District,are required to process all submitted applications for free or reduced-price school meals, regardless of immigration or refugee status and without discrimination based on race, color or national origin. Eligibility is based on criteria outlined in the free and reduced-price school meal application instructions.

**Q: What does public charge mean?**

**A:** Public charge is used by immigration to decide whether a person can enter the U.S. or get a green card/visa. Within this decision making process, the totality of a person’s circumstances are reviewed including their participation in assistance programs such as SNAP, Medicaid, public housing, cash assistance, etc.

**Q: If I apply for free or reduced-price school meals, is this considered a public charge?**

**A:** No. Applying for free or reduced-price school meals is not considered an assistance program on the grounds of public charge and will not affect green card or visa status. Additionally, Montezuma-Cortez School Districtdoes not report meal application information to migrant, immigration, or refugee offices.

**Q: Does the** Montezuma-Cortez School District **free and reduced-price school meal application ask for an immigration, migrant, citizenship, or refugee status?**

**A:** No. Immigration, migrant, citizenship, or refugee status is not asked for during the application process, and families should continue to apply for free or reduced-price school meals. The application does require the last four numbers of a Social Security number or an indication that there is no Social Security number. Social Security number information is *not* reported to any organization outside of Montezuma-Cortez School District.

**Q: Does** Montezuma-Cortez School District **ever share students’ free or reduced-price school meal information?**

**A:** Free and reduced-price school meal application information may be shared with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine beneﬁts for their programs. Families have the option to decline allowing their information to be shared with local education programs, Medicaid offices and/or State Children’s Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP).

**Q: What should I do if I feel like my student, or I have been the victim of discrimination or harassment when filling out or submitting a free or reduced-price school meal application?**

**A: Contact** Montezuma-Cortez School District Nutrition Services at 2003 Industrial Road Cortez, CO or call 970-565-5157.

### WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

* <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/know-your-rights/>
* https://www.cortez.k12.co.us
* CDE, School Meal Eligibility webpage: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/schoolmealeligibility>