



May 31, 2024

Henry Schantzen, Head of School  
Bluffview Montessori School  
[hschantzen@bluffviewmontessori.org](mailto:hschantzen@bluffviewmontessori.org)

Dear Henry,

This letter is in response to your email on May 29, 2024 in which you requested additional information regarding your Pre-Kindergarten program not being eligible for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and Minnesota Free School Meals Program.

As you noted in your email, Bluffview Montessori has chosen to have its preschool program certified as a child care through the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), and as you noted this allows Bluffview to participate in the [Child Care Assistance Program \(CCAP\)](#). Per the DHS website, CCAP provides financial assistance to help families with low incomes pay for child care. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a number of Child Nutrition Programs that apply to various settings. Pre-Kindergarten programs that are certified or licensed, like Bluffview Montessori, need to follow the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Although the CACFP is not an eligible program under Minnesota Free School Meals, the CACFP does have comparable federal reimbursement.

If you determine that you are no longer going to certify the preschool program as a child care, then you can claim the meals served to the children in the preschool program at your school through the School Nutrition Programs, but you cannot have your preschool licensed or certified and participate in Minnesota Free School Meals.

If Bluffview continues certifying the Pre-Kindergarten program as a child care through DHS to be eligible for CCAP and other child care program funding, then your program will not be eligible for the School Nutrition Programs. In this scenario, we would encourage you to consider operating USDA's [Child and Adult Care Food Program](#). Many schools in Minnesota operate the School Nutrition Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program in similar situations. Due to this, we have a streamlined application process for CACFP if you choose to go this route.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Emily Honer'.

Emily Honer  
Nutrition Program Services Director