

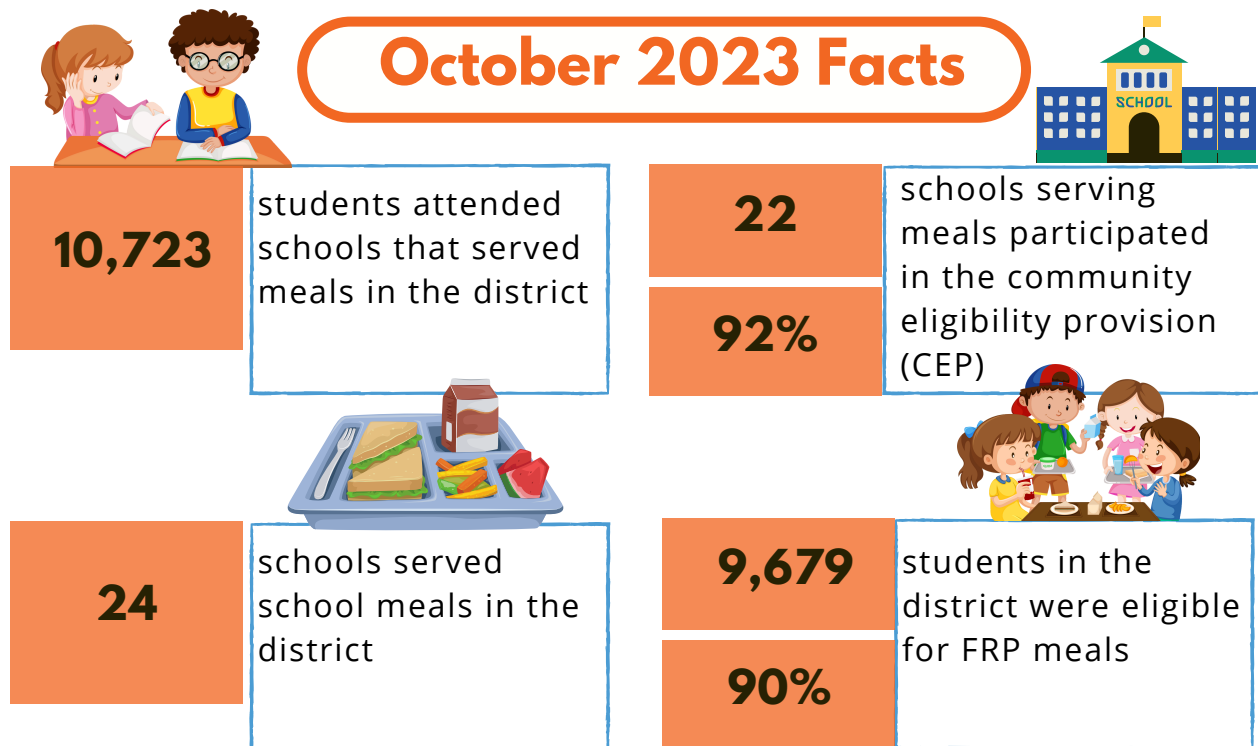
# 2024 NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL MEALS

## CALDWELL COUNTY SCHOOLS

Students cannot learn if they are hungry. School meals are a powerful tool for increasing academic achievement and fighting child hunger. This profile provides a snapshot of how **Caldwell County Schools** is providing access to healthy school meals for students in **Caldwell County**. Use this profile to celebrate successes and identify opportunities to continue the fight against child hunger.

### Overview of the Program

- The **National School Lunch Program** and **School Breakfast Program** provide healthy meals that meet federal nutrition guidelines to students.
- **School meals have many benefits** including improved academic performance and attendance, fewer behavioral issues, improved food security, and better diet quality.<sup>1</sup>
- All students can participate in school meals. **Students from low-income households can qualify for free or reduced-price (FRP) school meals.**
- Districts that have a high percentage of low-income students may opt to serve meals through the **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**. CEP provides school meals at no cost to families in high poverty areas without having to fill out school meals applications.



For more information visit: [CarolinaHungerInitiative.org/Profiles](https://CarolinaHungerInitiative.org/Profiles)

# CALDWELL COUNTY SCHOOLS

## School Meals Policy Updates

- The North Carolina General Assembly allocated recurring funds in the 2023 Appropriations Act (House Bill 259) to **provide lunch at no cost to students eligible for reduced-price lunch.**
- During the 2023-24 school year, North Carolina began participating in the **Direct Certification with Medicaid** (DC-M) demonstration project. The DC-M project allows children receiving Medicaid from households who meet income eligibility guidelines to be directly certified to receive free or reduced-price school meals without having to fill out a household application.

## October 2023 School Meals Participation

	School Breakfast		School Lunch	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Students	5,077	47%	7,323	68%
FRP Students	4,672	48%	6,758	70%

### Innovative Breakfast Models

Students may have difficulty participating in school breakfast when it is served before school in the cafeteria. Many schools across North Carolina use innovative breakfast serving models such as **breakfast in the classroom, second chance breakfast, or grab n' go breakfast** to make it easier for students to participate and fuel up before learning. Learn more about breakfast serving models here: [go.unc.edu/breakfastmodels](https://go.unc.edu/breakfastmodels)

