



Forest Area Schools Offering 3 Free Meals A Day This Year

August 16, 2018 by [Chloe Kiple](#), [Brandon Speagle](#)

A local school district is offering new services for the upcoming school year for a pretty good price...



Forest Area schools now offering free breakfast, lunch and dinner every day to all students.

Going back to school can mean lots of expenses for families, which is why this school year the Forest Area schools are offering new, free, services to students.

"There's a lot of stress on families already," said Forest Area

Middle School and High School principal Lisa Magee. "Roughly 70 to 75 percent of our families are working at or below the line of poverty...

We want to eliminate that stress and work as a team."

The school doesn't believe in "pay to play" models and has free sports, band and jazz lessons.

"We need to support our kids and make sure everyone has an equal opportunity to play," said Magee.

The school campus also has onsite medical service building. That offers free sports physicals, checkups, counseling and more.

One of the programs expanding this year is the after school SEEDS program. The activity debuted last school year for fourth through eighth graders. Now elementary schoolers can join in on the fun, too.

SEEDS focuses on STEM, life skills and outdoor education.

"SEEDS after school programs are more than what you'd call a daycare," said SEEDS program leader Joe Kreider. "We target specifically kids that are struggling...it helps them be able to really engage in the things that we do.

It's a supportive group – and often – a transformative experience for kids.

"We had some kids who were really just shy," said Kreider. "[After SEEDS] I saw how they really came out of their shell."

The SEEDS program also feeds kids dinner. The school believes the nutritious meals do more than fill bellies – but really fuel the minds of their students.

"We need to make sure all our kids are taken care of their baselines, emotionally, physically and if we can do all of that then were able to educate them," said Magee.