

LCSd KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION 2020-2021

FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT FAQs

Are school meals healthy?

All school meals and snacks under the Federal Child Nutrition Program are required to adhere to nutrition guidelines provided by the USDA. Changes to the school lunch program in 2014 limited calories, fat, saturated fat, and sodium by age group. Every child is required to have at least a 1/2 cup fruit or vegetable on their tray. In addition, we offer a variety of vegetable subgroups including red/orange, green, beans, starchy, and others each week. We hope to encourage students to try a wide variety of foods, avoid the “good” vs. “bad” food talk, and promote a healthy relationship with eating for years to come. I tell students “all foods fit!” – including treats. If you would like more resources on body positivity and raising intuitive eaters, please contact Lindsey.

I'm nervous about allowing my child to eat at school because he/she has food allergies or special dietary needs. What can I do?

Our school dietitian is available as a resource. First, all food allergies require documentation signed by a medical professional indicating appropriate substitutions/limitations. The note should be given to the School Nurse who then shares this information with the Food Service office. Reasonable accommodations can be made for student food allergies once the note is received. Our dietitian keeps a detailed allergy list of food items and updates nurses and cafeteria staff regularly throughout the school year. We also have a **gluten free menu** for students with a medical necessity. If your child has a medical need for a gluten free meal, please see allergy procedures above. **Please call or e-mail us** so that we can inform kitchen staff that your child plans to buy lunch at school. This way we can be prepared with gluten free items to best serve your student. Please view our food allergy and nutrition information disclaimer on our food service department website under “Food Allergies & Special Dietary Needs.”

Why do you serve flavored milk and “sugary” cereals?

Chocolate milk is a topic of great debate. As a dietitian, my main goal is for children to get the nutrients they need to grow and thrive. If a child is more likely to drink chocolate milk as opposed to no milk at all, I am happy they are choosing an item that provides calcium, protein, and vitamin D necessary for bone health. Also keep in mind that a plain 8 oz milk contains 12 grams of natural sugar (lactose), so the chocolate milk containing 22 grams of sugar is not **ALL** added. Breakfast cereal can be a great source of nutrients, as many are fortified with iron, B vitamins, etc. All of our cereals are whole-grain rich and many are reduced sugar varieties. The items produced for school meals are not the average items you would see in the grocery store. At breakfast, we must offer fruit, milk, and at least one grain product (generally, entrée choices include a main entrée of the day or cereal). We aim to provide delicious, nourishing meals for students to fuel for a busy day while adhering to very specific USDA regulations.



Does my child have to take milk with her/his meal?

Milk is NOT a requirement for a complete school meal. Students must select 3+ components for a complete lunch and at least one of them must be a ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable. Otherwise, it is up to the student to select which items they would like. If your child is **lactose intolerant**, we can provide Lactaid as long as the nurse/food service department receives a signed note from a medical professional indicating that a substitution is required.



What kinds of snacks do you offer?

A la carte snacks and beverages also have a set of requirements that must be met. Learn more about “Smart Snacks” criteria on our LCSD Food Service webpage. We offer whole grain rich cookies, low fat ice cream, baked chips, and more that all meet Smart Snack criteria. If you don’t want your child(ren) to have free reign of snacks, you may add a note to their food service account by calling our department directly at (315) 622-7172. For example, “Ice cream on Fridays only” or a similar request (within reason) may be added to the account pop-up so that our staff can quickly comprehend the request.

My child is diabetic and needs to know carbohydrate counts before eating. Is it possible for him/her to eat school meals?

Absolutely. Our school dietitian posts monthly carb counts for breakfast/lunch on the food service website and corresponds with nurses regularly regarding changes.

My child is vegetarian. What options exist for him/her?

Each school offers peanut butter and jelly sandwiches daily. In addition, pizza is available at least 3 days per week. Some of our main entrees are vegetarian as well, such as French toast sticks and poppers, grilled cheese, pancakes with yogurt, and more!

How does my child pay for school lunch?

Your child may bring cash or check to the cashier in the school cafeteria. You may also pre-load your child’s account online using MySchoolBucks at <https://www.myschoolbucks.com>. Please note that there is a small fee associated with adding money to your child’s account online. This fee is affiliated with the website, not the district. You may also review purchase history from MySchoolBucks. If your child forgets their lunch money, we will provide them with a meal and charge the account. You may send them with money/check or add to their account online to repay the balance. ****This info does not apply to Chestnut Hill**



Elementary. This is a CEP school and all students may receive free breakfast and lunch at this building only. See our website for Q&A about the CEP program. Parents/Guardians may follow the above procedures to pre-load money for snacks and a la carte items.**

Unsure if you qualify for **free or reduced price meals**? Fill out an application and return to the food service department to determine eligibility. Visit our department page for

more information: <http://www.liverpool.k12.ny.us/departments/food-service/>