

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are thrilled to be serving your child for the 2026-2027 school year! To kick off the new school year, we wanted to share a few things you and your child can look forward to when it comes to mealtime.

Food Kids Love to Eat

Chartwells team of chefs and dietitians are working to bring even more variety to our menus featuring new recipes with kid-approved foods. This year we're serving up:

- o Global Eats
- o Specialty Sandwiches and Salads
- o Daily Pizza options at the middle/high school
- o Student Choice
- o Special Thanksgiving Meal
- o Corn Day!
- o Mood Boost
- o Deli bar at the secondary school
- o Additional a la carte snacks for 4th and 5th graders at ACES
- o Expanded breakfast options at the elementary level

In addition, we will also be opening our school cafe at the new Middle/High School where we will be selling coffee, snacks and breakfast options for students 9th grade and above.

We have also expanded daily menu choices at the middle/high school with the completion of our brand new kitchen.

Meal Cost and Free and Reduced Applications

For the upcoming school year Pennsylvania has authorized one **Free Breakfast per day** for all students. Free or reduced-price lunch is only available to students who qualify for these benefits, and for this school year if you qualify for a reduced - price lunch a new provision allows for a Free lunch.

All students, regardless of family situations, are encouraged to dine in the cafeteria together.

For the 2026-27 school year, the elementary level breakfast will cost \$2.83 and lunch will cost \$3.15. At the Middle School and High School level breakfast will cost \$2.83 and lunch will cost \$3.30.

We encourage all families, regardless of income, to complete and submit a short, confidential school meal application prior to the start of the school year to ensure that there are no gaps in meal benefits for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Parents or guardians can submit this application online at [school cafe](#) or in person at your child's school office. It's an easy and confidential way to ensure your child stays well-nourished at school. If you have any questions regarding lunch applications, please contact Jen Dooley at 717.359.4146, ext. 1299.

We are always striving to provide increased options and menu diversity to our students to help to avoid menu fatigue. These items are **charged separately** from the standard meal program and must be paid using dining dollars, which can be added by **cash, check, or credit card (School Cafe - a processing fee will apply to credit card payments).**

However, due to recurring issues with **unpaid negative balances**, and in accordance with **Littlestown Area School District (LASD) Policy 808**, staff will no longer be permitted to sell a la carte items to students who carry a **negative meal account balance**. If at the end of the school year, the balance is over \$100, the debt will be turned over to a collection agency for processing. Frequent reminders will be sent out to help avoid accumulating negative balances.

In order to modify the school meal, we must have a written Medical Statement on file signed by a licensed medical provider (physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner). The statement must identify the following:

- Information about the child's impairment that is sufficient for understanding how it restricts the child's diet,
- An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child's disability, and
- If appropriate, the food(s) to be omitted, texture modifications, and recommended substitutions.

Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

We recognize the critical importance of our approach to supporting students and families who manage food allergy issues every day and work closely with the families of students who have food allergies and medical conditions that require a modification to their menu. Our approach involves coordination between parents and guardians, school nurses, school administrators, and food service professionals in the school's/district's food allergy and medical conditions protocol.

If you would like your child to receive meal accommodations for food allergies or a medical condition impacting the diet, please ensure that you submit the required documentation to your child's school nurse and that you receive confirmation that documentation has been received and a modification plan is in place. As part of our protocol, café managers review food labels for foods used to produce special meals daily; however, we are facing unprecedented food supply issues and while we are doing everything we can to minimize disruptions to our program, we do expect to experience continued shortages and substitutions. Therefore, we may encounter situations where product substitutions are made that contain different allergens or have a different nutritional profile than our usual menu items. As a result, we may need to provide a meal that is different than previously identified for students with special dietary needs to ensure that the meal served to them remains in adherence to their needs as outlined in their medical forms.

While we have posted signs in the cafeteria encouraging students with food allergies or other dietary concerns to speak up, we encourage you to remind your child to be sure to check with the cafeteria manager regarding product substitutions that may not be reflected in the posted menu. We will make every attempt to update Nutrislice in real-time, but please do not solely rely on nutrition or allergen information on Nutrislice to accommodate allergies or medical conditions in the event of last-minute menu changes.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's allergies or dietary needs, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. We are committed to providing safe meals for all students.

As kids advance from grade to grade with new classes and different teachers, the dedicated lunch ladies and men in the school cafeteria are often one of the few constants throughout the academic journey. Throughout the school year, these heroes of the cafeteria are dedicated to making mealtime a bright spot in a student's day, ensuring kids in the Littlestown community are served nourishing meals.

We are always looking for talented individuals to join the dining services team with perks including, family friendly schedules, no night or weekend work, hiring incentives, and more. For more information, visit [Compass Group Career](#) or call 717.359.4146

Through sharing our passion for great tasting food, instilling a desire for food discovery, and most importantly, providing nourishing meals, we're excited to continue serving up happy and healthy food to your children in the year ahead.

We love hearing from parents, and your feedback is important to us. Please reach out to our team with any questions or comments. We're looking forward to a great school year!

Thank you,
Matthew Snell, Director of Dining Services
snellm@lasd.k12.pa.us or 717.359.4146