

Parent Handbook for School Lunch Program

2023–2024



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SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM



The Kings Local School District has the pleasure of providing services to the students of St Margaret of York School, contributing to the overall physical and mental well being of each student. We support the student's development toward a healthier future through promoting healthy eating and wellness.

The Kings Local School District participates in the National School Programs, offering lunch service daily to all students. The types of meals provided within the school meal program encompass standards as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. All menus are planned following standards of the National School Lunch Program as governed by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Parents/Guardians may apply for free or reduced price meals by completing an application for free and reduced price meals. Students who were approved at the end of last year automatically (temporarily) qualify again this year (for 30 school days). However, a new application must be completed for the 2023-2024 school year within 30 days. If a new application is not completed and processed by September 27th, 2023, the previous year's eligibility status is no longer valid.

Upon eligibility, children may receive free meals -or- reduced priced meals. The reduced lunch meal will be served as no cost to the students as this is a new benefit at the State Level for the 2023-2024 school year. The full cost of meals has to be paid until the parent/guardian is notified of their eligibility status. Anyone not previously approved may apply at any time during the school year. All information remains confidential. Free and Reduced Meal Applications can be obtained in the front office of your child's school, as well as from the Kings Local School District's website. You can also apply for the program online at www.payschoolscentral.com

Menus will be made available monthly to the Parents and Students on the school website located in the Friday Folder. A variety of choices are offered for your child, providing a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables daily. In addition to the main hot meals a number of other healthy selections will be made available to students. In addition, bottled water and juices will be available as ala carte option.

Providing healthy food choices and well-balanced meals will contribute to the daily nutritional needs of students. The Ohio Department of Education mandates that food not be sold in competition with the school lunch.

- ❖ School stores, vending machines, fundraising or concession outside of those operated by Food Service Department are prohibited to operate during school meal times as this is deemed as competition with National School Lunch Program;
- ❖ Offering of foods or beverages in vending services that do not meet the nutritional standards established within District policy may not be sold during school day to students. Bake sales and other school fundraising activities involving food and beverage items may not be held during the school meal periods;
- ❖ Outside of the School Lunch period, when foods and beverages are sold, if sold to students in the school day (between midnight and 30 minutes after the close of school) it is required that items sold meet the U.S.D.A (United States of Agriculture) guidelines. Such standards are provided within the Nutrition Standard memorandum (located on the Food Service website).

Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program



Free and reduced price lunches are available to students who qualify and meet the eligibility guidelines. Families that currently have an application on file will automatically qualify for the first 30 days of the new school year. Families will however need to re-apply for the new school year by completing a new application within the first 30 days of the new school year. The program eligibility from the previous year will expire Wednesday, September 27th, 2023. Those families that do not currently have an application on file are encouraged to apply prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications are available on the Kings Local website, or parents/guardians can apply on line. The online feature can be accessed on the Kings Local Food Service website. Copies of the meal application will be made available. Applications are accepted any time during the school year. Parents who have any change in employment or income during any time of the year may apply for benefits. Foster children automatically qualify for free lunch once an application is provided to the food service department.

As a District who participates in the National School Lunch Program, we also participate in a process called Direct Certification. This program provides the ability to directly certify enrolled students for free meal benefits in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. The Direct Certification Process provides the school district with a list of students who reside with a food assistance program. These students are categorically certified to receive free meals. A letter will be sent to their household with notification of what students are eligible for direct certification benefits. Parents are allowed to decline the benefits by completing the form and then returning the notification letter to the Food Service office. If a sibling is not listed on the Direct Certification Notification Letter, the parents will then need to submit a free and reduced meal application for that child.

2023-2024 Lunch Meal Prices

Elementary, Kg - 4th grade \$ 2.75 (includes milk)

Grades 5th through 8th Grade \$ 3.00 (includes milk)

Milk - \$.55 (1 serving included with each purchased meal tray)

Bottled Waters - \$.50 (not included with meal, additional cost)



Only (1) meal is provided at the Free and Reduced meal rate to those children that qualify for the program. If a student is determined eligible for the free and reduced meal program and requires a second meal tray, the second meal is charged at the full price rate. Those students packing meals from home and would like to purchase a bottles water, milk or juice funds will need to be placed on the students account prior to the purchase of these items. Upon students purchasing items (i.e., lunch, milk etc.) regardless of method of payment, students will be required to enter their student ID number to access their account. *It is very important that the students learn their ID numbers prior to the start of school.*



Allergies – Special Dietary Needs

All allergies or special dietary needs will need to be communicated to School Nurses by the parent and/or guardian. Written documentation of the special dietary need will also be required for student's school medical record. When meal substitutions are needed by Food Services they will be provided to students who are unable to eat/drink regular meal items; however, written documentation by the child's physician of special dietary need is required.

How to Make a Payment for School Meals

St Margaret of York School utilizes a computer-based cash register program which provides an automated system providing quick, secure access to student information. Upon students wishing to make a purchase regardless of payment method, students will be asked to enter their student ID number. Each student has his or her own ID #.



Send a CHECK into school with your child (make check payable to Kings Local Food Service) OR,



Send CASH into school with your child and her/she can give it directly to the school office OR,



Pay on-line at www.payschoolscentra.com to make a payment. By using a credit card on line a transaction fee will be applied. See Kings Local Food Service website for fee information. Payments sent into school with your child, there are no fees applied for adding funds onto your child's account.

In order to provide efficient service pre-payment into student's account is highly encouraged. All remaining balances from previous school year transfers to the account of each student for the following year. Students with unpaid meal balances will also carry over to the next school year. All remaining unpaid meal balances need to be paid. Upon a student withdrawing or at the point of their 8th grade graduation please contact the food service dept. to request a refund of your students remaining meal account funds or you can email direct at jarlinghaus@kingslocal.net

Lunch Charges

When students are without funds in their lunch accounts for meals we will make accommodations for students to charge meals. All meals that are charged to the student's account during these occurrences need to be paid on a weekly basis. The Kings Local School District maintains policy standards; as stated in the "Alternative Meal Policy". Please review this policy for our standards for charging of meals. All students will be notified weekly of all unpaid meal charges through the automated school messenger system. If you are in need of assistance with meal charges, please contact Food Service Director and a payment schedule will be arranged as needed. All charges will be required to be paid in full prior to the end of each week.

Returned Checks



When checks are returned for insufficient funds parents will be notified. Additional checks will NOT be accepted until all fees have been paid. In the event that a check is returned for insufficient funds, payment can only be made with cash or money order.

Common Lunchroom Questions

What is the procedure for lunch meal purchases at meal time?

Upon making an a la carte purchase each student will have his/her OWN lunch account that upon coming into the lunchroom is accessed by entering his or her student ID# into a Pin Pad.

How will my student receive their ID number?

The student can obtain their ID from the main office at the school. Student's ID number remains the same throughout all grades (K-12)

What if someone accidentally enters the wrong number?

It is very unlikely that this will occur. If a student accidentally enters the wrong number, the cashier will immediately detect it as name and photo of student appears.

Should I pay with cash or check?

Either is fine, whatever is most convenient. We do encourage pre-payment of meals. Sending in lunch money perhaps weekly or monthly vs daily provides faster more efficient service.

If my child pays his/her meal with a check can they receive cash back?

No. For the protection of the District we have to insure that the check clears through the bank therefore the register system doesn't allow cash returned for checks.

Will my child receive change back from a cash purchase?

No. In order to provide quick, efficient service all change will be placed on their account. The change is held in account and remains on the account until used by the student. If the student asks the cashier for their change to be returned, we will certainly accommodate this request.

May another sibling use his/her brother's account?

No. Only the person whom that account has been assigned to may use the account.

How will my child be notified when his/her lunch accounts gets low?

Lunch Balances for students can be checked on-line @ www.payforit.net. Accounts for that student will need to be created on the Pay For It website before access is permitted. There are NO fees subjected for viewing of reports, balances however an account needs to be set up on the website in order for you to access the features on the website.

What if my child has money in his or her account at the end of the school year?

All funds remaining on the account carries over to the next year. Should families move from the District or their child is a senior will be issued a refund after receiving a written request from the parent and/or guardian.

Reimbursement of Student Accounts



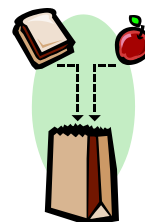
Students graduating or transferring out of district may request in writing to the Food Service Director for reimbursement or by email at jarlinghaus@kingslocal.net. All remaining students to the District their balances will transfer automatically into the new school year.

Suggestions for Packing Healthy Lunches

If students chose to pack their lunch it is very important that the student and parents work together to pack healthy lunches. The Food & Nutrition Services Dept. discourages parents from bringing in non-nutritious “fast-food” from outside establishments. Such items being brought in to the school during mealtime is prohibited unless prior approval is obtained by the School Principal. Students should avoid packing non-nutritious foods in their lunches (i.e. candy) but rather include healthy options.

Home Packed Lunch Suggestions: (Cold, refreshing, nutritious low fat milk (1%, skim) can be purchased at school, along with a selection of bottled waters and 100% juice products).

- Low fat meat or cheese sandwiches
- Lowfat cheese with whole wheat crackers or bagel
- Fresh vegetables with dip
- Pretzels, crackers, bagels,
- Low-fat muffins
- Granola bars
- Dried fruit
- Pudding or fruited yogurt cup



Fundraising

St Margaret of York School strongly encourages the sale or distribution of healthy foods for fundraising purposes. School based fundraising that occurs during the school day (between midnight and thirty (30) minutes after to the close of school) are required upon selling of food to meet the U.S.D.A. Competitive food regulations, Smart Snacks standards and regulations of the Alliance for Healthier Generation’s Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines.

The sale of food during the lunch periods is not permitted by the Ohio Department of Education as this is deemed to be in competition with the school lunch.

If fundraising is held outside the regular and extended school day (between midnight and thirty (30) minutes after the close of the school day), the regulations thereof are no longer enforced at this time under the U.S.D.A. (United States of Agriculture).

Snack Suggestions for Students

St Margaret of York School offers guidance to parents in selecting healthy and nut free snacks while in school. It is the intention to support student development toward promoting healthy foods while providing food offerings that are safe for all students to order to minimize allergen events..

At times when students bring in snacks for meal times or for consumption after school we offer suggestions for preparation of snacks as follows:

- ❖ Recommend cutting up fresh fruits and vegetables to provide ease of consumptions for your child; please wash before cutting all fruits and vegetables.
- ❖ Fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, yogurt, cheese and other healthy choices like dried fruit are preferred snack choices.
- ❖ There is NO refrigeration available for snacks, if the snack requires refrigeration it is recommended that it is placed in a lunch pail with an ice pack.
- ❖ It is preferred that snacks are pre-packaged, sealed, individually wrapped (in the original package) and nut free.

To minimize allergic reactions among students with allergen sensitivities the items below are to be avoided as snack options. And, it is recommended that these items not be shared among students:

- ❖ All nuts (i.e., peanuts, cashews, walnuts, pecans, pistachios' almonds, etc...)
- ❖ Peanut Butter or Nut Butters
- ❖ Sesame Seeds
- ❖ Homemade Snacks or Baked Goods
- ❖ Granola or Granola Bars
- ❖ Trail Mix or other snack mixes

PLEASE NOTE – It is important that labels for snacks be reviewed carefully, reading labels thoroughly. Snacks that contain statement such as “may contain traces of...” Or, “Made on equipment that manufactures or processes...” or, “Made in a facility that manufactures....” are **NOT** considered to be safe due to cross contamination of the allergen.

Snacks containing peanuts or other nuts are **NOT** allowed for classroom snacks. This includes snacks containing any type of nut (i.e., peanuts, cashews, almonds, walnuts, pecans, brazil nuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pine nuts, pistachios and sesame seeds). Items contained on this list are those at this time do not contain peanut or nut products. These items have NOT been reviewed for the other major allergens. Parents (and teachers) are encouraged to check labels on food labels to be sure that the products do not contain offending allergens and safe for the child to eat.

Food items stored in bins or storage containers in the home may be contaminated by residue from a food containing peanut or a nut product. Upon foods being brought into the classroom, please store in a secure location, avoiding cross contamination from foods potential to cause allergic reactions. Contact your child's School Nurse or the Food Service Director if you have questions or concerns.

PREFERRED SNACK CHOICES:

Fresh Fruit (washed) ***

Suggestions:

Apples (red, green)
Bananas
Grapes (red, green)
Melon (cantaloupe, watermelon)
Orange Slices
Peaches/Pears
Pineapple

Fresh Vegetables (washed) ***

Suggestions:

Bell Pepper Strips
Broccoli Florets with ranch dip
Carrot Sticks
Cauliflower florets with ranch dip
Celery Sticks
Cherry Tomatoes
Sugar Snap Peas

*** When cutting up fresh fruit and vegetables in order to prevent cross contamination make sure that these items are not cut on the same cutting board or with a knife that has been used in prior food preparation. Washing utensils and kitchen counters with hot water and soap is the best way to remove the residue; wiping or rinsing the counter/work space and utensils is not enough to remove the residue and could leave enough allergen to cause a reaction. Proper cleaning of work surfaces and utensils is extremely important.

Dried Fruit -

Suggestions:

Craisins
Raisins

Yogurt/Cheese -

Suggestions:

Mozzarella String Cheese
Colby-Jack Cheese Stick

ACCEPTABLE SNACK CHOICES: (check ingredient labels at all times)

Crackers -

Suggestions:

Barnum Animal Crackers, Keebler
Cheese Nips, Kraft
Goldfish Crackers, Pepperidge Farm
Honey Maid Graham Crackers, Nabisco
Scooby Doo Graham Cracker Sticks, Keebler
Teddy Graham Crackers, Nabisco
Triscuit and Wheat Thin Crackers, Nabisco

Chips/Pretzels/Popcorn -

Suggestions:

Baked Ruffle Chips, Frito Lay
Goldfish Pretzels, Pepperidge Farm
Mister Salty Pretzel & cheese dip
Pringles, Kellogg's
Rold Gold Pretzels (twists, stix)
Smart food Popcorn, Frito-Lay
Veggie Chips, Natural Foods

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