



Warren Consolidated Schools

Creating Dynamic Futures through Student Achievement, High Expectations, and Strong Relationships

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NUTRITION SERVICES

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Welcome Back! We are very excited to serve our students, as we understand the direct correlation between healthy eating and academic success. In addition to lunches, the Nutrition Services Department offers a variety of easy-to-eat nutritional breakfasts served out of the cafeteria each morning at least 15 minutes prior to the start of school. Our school breakfast program gives hardworking parents a hand in meeting their child's nutritional needs without interrupting the school day or taking away from important learning.

Great News! We are pleased to inform families that the district will participate in the Seamless Summer Option as part of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs for the 2021-22 school year. **All breakfasts and lunches will be free for WCS students.** Middle school and high school families are encouraged to still complete free and reduced lunch applications to ensure access to the Pandemic EBT benefit providing the State of Michigan approves continuation of this program for the upcoming school year. As all of our elementary students are part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for this upcoming year; all elementary students will automatically qualify for the P-EBT program in the event it is continued.

What do families need to do?

Families of Elementary Students only:

Fill out and sign the Household Information Report. This report is critical in determining the amount of money that our school receives from a variety of State and Federal supplemental programs including Title I A, At-risk (31a), Title II A, E-Rate, etc. These supplemental programs have the potential to offer supports and services to students, including, but not limited to:

- Instructional supports (staff, supplies & materials, etc.)
- Non-instructional services (counseling, social work, health services, etc.)
- Professional Learning for staff
- Parent and Community engagement supplies and activities
- Technology

Families of Middle School and High School Students:

Complete the Free/Reduced Priced Meal Application. This convenient and confidential website allows for quicker processing than the paper applications. The link to www.lunchapp.com is available at the WCS Nutrition Services website which can be found within the WCS homepage. Please keep in mind a new application needs to be completed each school year. Communication is mailed to the household explaining the benefits that a family qualified for; hold onto this letter as you might need this notification to take advantage of discounts offered by some internet providers. A paper application can be obtained from the school office. Completing this application is critical to the amount of funds our schools receives and will possibly provide access to the P-EBT program if the program continues.

Free/reduced lunch verifications: In October 2021, the Nutrition Services Department is required by the USDA to verify 3% of our free/reduced lunch applications. Applications are chosen randomly by our Point of Sale system. If your application is chosen, you will receive a letter in early October outlining the process. We are here to assist you through the entire verification process and make it as simple for you as possible. Unfortunately, if you don't respond your children will not receive the benefits of certain federally funded programs.

Ala carte Purchases and Online Payment: Food items like baked chips, whole grain cookies, and alternative beverages will be available to purchase in the secondary buildings. In order to limit cash handling, we will encourage online deposits with a credit card to be made to a student's nutrition account by using www.SendMoneyToSchool.com. You will need your child's ID number to access their account. It is an excellent way to track all transactions that take place in the cafeteria. There is a minimum online credit card deposit of \$10, however there are no additional charges for transactions. Deposits can be made at school with CASH ONLY. Nutrition Services is not able to accept checks.

Allergies: Students who have food allergies can be accommodated by our staff. The Michigan Department of Education's *Request for Special Dietary Needs Accommodations* form needs to be completed with a doctor's list of substitutions and the doctor's signature in order to make menu modifications. This form can be found under the Nutrition Services tab on the district website. Individual meetings to discuss alternative menus may be arranged with the district's Dietitian and School Nurse.

Student Balances: Although due to the pandemic this school year's meals are free, we want to remind you that in normal circumstances it is district policy that we ensure that all students receive a standard meal including those students who do not have funds in their account or in hand to cover the cost of their full meal at the time of service. We have not sent collection letters to families since the start of the pandemic, but we will resume with reminders of negative balances incurred prior to March 2020. Notification will be mailed to households, and emailed to addresses on file. Credit is not extended for ala carte purchases.

Latchkey Snacks and Half Day Lunches: After school snacks will be provided by the Nutrition Services staff for elementary students attending latchkey. These snacks meet nutritional guidelines set forth by the USDA. Students must take the entire snack, which consists of two items from these groups: grains, proteins, fruit, vegetable, or milk. Students attending latchkey on a scheduled half day will have the ability to pre-order a cold lunch for free. Order forms will be provided by the latchkey staff.

Menu Changes: District food providers, have communicated that this school year there may be anticipated food availability issues. Food manufacturers and transportation companies have reported labor shortages and consequently this is impacting the production and movement of food across the nation. Planned menu items may not be available to the district at the time of purchase. We ask families to please be understanding that menu changes may be frequent this school year, and menu changes will be reported to the school office to announce to students prior to dining.

Food Service Lines: The food service industry has experienced many changes throughout the pandemic. Things like how food is served, self-service food stations, and shared condiment counters have had changing guidance. The WCS Nutrition Service department works closely with the Macomb County Health Department, Environmental Health Division to monitor changing guidelines. Students who will be dining in the cafeteria will see changes to our service lines that will follow proper safety protocols. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate the opening of the school year. Please be assured that your student's safety and pleasant dining experience is our top priority.

WE NEED YOUR HELP: The Nutrition Services is looking to hire dedicated individuals to work in the kitchens, there are many openings that need to be filled. This job allows you to coordinate a work schedule while your child is in school and earn additional monies. If you are interested in learning more about working in school kitchens, please call the Nutrition Service Department at 586.698.4157 or the Human Resources Department at 586.698.4521.