

# School Nutrition Services

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 Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
 Supervisor – Beth Thompson, MS,RDN,LD, School Nutrition Director  
 Office – Tami Goode, School Nutrition Accounting Specialist

## Welcome Back from your School Nutrition Department!

We are excited for the new school year and can hardly wait to provide students with healthy versions of their favorite foods. Our goal is to offer delicious foods that appeal to students so they can benefit from school meals to provide the nutrition and energy to keep them going strong throughout their academic day.



Beth Thompson,  
 School Nutrition Director

We proudly participate in two state initiatives to help promote the variety of healthy and delicious food options that make up our customer driven menus. The 2020 Vision is a statewide initiative developed to promote our state's agricultural industry. We have already met the 2020 goal of at least 20% of the required menu components for a student meal to include Georgia grown products; and we are striving to be one of the 20% of schools in Georgia to have at least 50% of the required student meal components comprised of Georgia Grown products by the end of 2020. Our other focus is a statewide campaign known as "Shake It Up in School Nutrition". This is an initiative to enhance the flavor of school meals and improve the perception of Georgia School Nutrition programs. Since the sodium level of school meals has to be relatively low, our staff is finding ways to use other flavors and spices to enhance the taste of our students favorite foods.

Did you know that much of the food we feature in our menus is familiar to what you might be using at home? We purchase our food from the same companies that the local grocery store purchases from including brands like Tyson, Gold Kist, Kellogg's, Dannon, Kraft, Jennie-O, Jimmy Dean, Pillsbury, Bush's Best, General Mills, Land O Lakes, Naturally Fresh, Ken's, Red Gold, Heinz, Ore Ida, and McCormick Spices. We also purchase Mayfield milk which is processed locally in Athens, Tennessee.

How do we afford to purchase these brand name foods? There is a misconception by many that school meals are funded by local school funds. That is not true. We are a self-sustaining operation and receive funds through the US Department of Agriculture as well as from the sale of school meals. For every reimbursable meal we serve, we earn cash subsidies and entitlement money to purchase USDA foods. The majority of our USDA entitlement dollars is used to purchase raw chicken and barrels of cheese that is sent to food manufacturers including Gold Kist, Tyson and Land O Lakes for processing into popular student items like chicken filets, tenders, nuggets, cheese

sticks and sauces. Actually, about 1/3 of our USDA commodity dollars is used to purchase fresh produce, much of which is locally grown. Although about 45% of the "lunch money" we receive pays for food, it also has to cover all the operational expenses-labor, benefits, supplies and equipment. We look forward to providing your children with a great meal at a great value.

### What we want our Parents to know

All food service employees throughout the district look forward to serving your child an outstanding meal! As the school year begins, we'd like for you to consider these things:

- 1) If you haven't been in a school cafeteria in recently, you may be surprised.
- 2) School meals are nutritious: School meals are in line with the latest nutrition science and are designed to meet 1/3 of the recommended daily allowance for calories. We offer students familiar foods that are whole grain-rich, low in sodium and low in saturated fat to balance nutrition requirements and consumer demand.
- 3) Parents can help their kids get used to the taste of the foods we feature by offering whole grain-rich foods at home like brown rice or whole wheat pizza crust, making fruits and vegetables available at every meal and snack, and cutting back on the salt whenever possible. With increased exposure to these foods, students will get accustomed to new foods and be willing to eat them both at school and home. In fact, most students don't even realize that their pizza crust is a whole grain product.
- 4) School meals are a good value and a time saver for parents. Take a break from packing your child's lunch and let us serve your child(ren).

### What we want our Students to know

We are certainly excited to serve each of you this year! Here's the scoop as we make preparations for the upcoming year:

- 1) Students are NOT required to take things they aren't going to eat.
- 2) The school lunch consists of five components, meat/meat alternate, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk. However, students only need to select three out of five meal components offered, including a 1/2 cup fruit OR 1/2 cup vegetable.
- 3) Students are not required to take a milk if they don't want.
- 4) Students must have cash in hand or money on account to buy a la carte items. This refers to anything selected other than a complete reimbursable meal. For example, just the entree would be an ala carte sale, it is not a complete meal.

### Why Eat Breakfast?

Breakfast is available at all schools approximately 30 to 45 minutes before school starts.

Free and reduced meal benefits apply to both breakfast and lunch. Children who do not eat break-

fast at home or at school are likely less able to learn. Children who eat a complete breakfast have been shown to work faster and make fewer mistakes in math problems and to perform better on vocabulary tests than those who ate only a partial breakfast. They also show improved concentration, alertness, comprehension, memory and learning.

By providing breakfast at school we can ensure that children are getting enough to eat.

### Did you know?

School Nutrition Services provides snacks free of charge to students participating in After School programs that include an enrichment or educational focus.

Mobile breakfast carts have been incorporated in all of the secondary schools to implement a grab n go breakfast for students to access on their way to class.

### Final Thoughts

Students that qualified for free and reduced meal benefits last school year will continue to receive these benefits for the first 30 days of school.

A new free and reduced application must be submitted and processed annually within the 30 day grace period in order for a determination to be made on what benefits the household is eligible for in the current school year.

Only submit 1 application per household, please do not send in a separate application for each student in the household.

School Nutrition has a new URL to access menus from your computer or from an App on your smartphone. Check out the new look of our menus and find nutritional information on the foods being served in your school's cafeteria. (www.pcsdragonmenus.com)

### Questions about your child's account?

Harmony, Gail Jones. . . . . 706-253-1847  
 Hill City, Glenda Bryant . . . . . 706-253-1889  
 Tate, Gina Pyles . . . . . 706-253-1861  
 Jasper Middle, Brenda Smith. . . . . 706-253-1737  
 Junior High, Joan Goss. . . . . 706-253-1837  
 Pickens High, Andrea Wood . . . . . 706-253-1805

### Meal Prices for 2019-2020 School Year

Student Breakfast	All Levels	\$1.50
	Reduced	\$.30
Adults & Guests		\$2.00
Student Lunch	Elementary	\$2.15
	Middle & Junior High	\$2.40
	High	\$2.45
	Reduced	\$.40
Teachers & Staff		\$3.50
Visitors		\$4.00