

MEMORANDUM

August 15, 2024

Action Required - ANNUAL



Office of District Operations
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

TO: All Principals
FROM: Dana E. Edwards, Chief of District Operations *DCE*
SUBJECT: *Food and Nutrition Services Program Update #2 for Fiscal Year 2025*

Summary

The Division of Food and Nutrition Services (DFNS) is excited to share Update #2 for the 2024–2025 school year. Please review the following updates regarding meal payment procedures, the school meals policy, and best practices for the first week of school. Please refer to the previous [July 18, 2024, Principals' Memoranda](#) which provided updates on meal pricing, the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) applications, and outreach information.

Meal Service Accountability

- All students will continue to utilize their Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) student identification number for meal accountability. All points of service in the cafeteria will have barcode scanners and keypads.
- DFNS will continue to provide barcoded cards for elementary school students to use at the point of service at lunch. Schools will automatically receive cards for all newly enrolled students only. Replacement cards for continuing students may be requested through each cafeteria manager.
- Additional information and best practices for elementary (Attachment A) and secondary (Attachment B) schools are shared.

Communication to Families

The annual *Cafeteria News and Meals Information* provided to schools has been revised to include one for non-CEP schools (Attachment F) and one for CEP schools (Attachment G). Although these documents appear similar, the information included is different. Please ensure your school selects and distributes only the version of the documents that apply to the meal service at your school. Translations of these documents are available on the [DFNS website](#).

Action Required

- Review *Back to the Basics: Meal Service* for elementary schools (Attachment A) or secondary schools (Attachment B) for information and best practices for the first week of school.
- Share the information with parents/guardians on special diet modifications for students with disabilities, students who have identified documented food allergies, intolerances, or sensitivities; and students who have been identified under Section 504 or have an Individualized Education Program.
- [MCPS Form 240-23, Special Dietary Needs Form](#), may be used to request accommodations (Attachment C). Translations of Attachment C are available on the [DFNS website](#).
- Review [Schools by Food Service Supervisor 2024–2025](#) (Attachment D) for supervisory team contacts.
- **NON-CEP SCHOOLS ONLY:**
 - Review *Meal Payment Procedure and MCPS Meal Policy* (Attachment E).
 - Share *2024–2025 Cafeteria News and Meals* (Attachment F) electronically with families before the first day of school.
- **CEP SCHOOLS ONLY:**
 - Share *2024–2025 Cafeteria News and Meals Information* (Attachment G) electronically with families before the first day of school.

Additional Information

For questions, please contact Mrs. Elizabeth (Liz) Leach, director, DFNS, at 240-740-7400 or via [email](#).

- Attachment A—Back to the Basics: Elementary Meal Service and Best Practices for the First Week of School
- Attachment B—Back to the Basics: Secondary Meal Service and Best Practices for the First Week of School
- Attachment C—[Form 240-23, Special Dietary Needs Form](#)
- Attachment D—[Schools by Food Service Supervisor 2024–2025](#)
- Attachment E—Meal Payment Procedure and MCPS Meal Policy
- Attachment F—2024–2025 Cafeteria News and Meals (non-CEP schools)
- Attachment G—2024–2025 Cafeteria News and Meals (CEP schools)

Approved by: Dana E. Edwards
Dana E. Edwards, Chief of District Operations

8/9/24
Date

Elementary Meal Service 2024–2025

Back to the Basics for Elementary Schools



Overview and Purpose

The goal of Montgomery County Public School's (MCPS) Meal Programs is to provide nutritious meals, fueling students to learn each school day. All MCPS cafeterias will continue to use laptops on the serving line, also referred to as the Point of Service (POS).

Student IDs and Lunch Cards

- Students will use their 6 – 8-digit MCPS Student Identification Number (Student ID) when going through the cafeteria line for breakfast and lunch.
- Lunch cards are intended to be reused each school year. Please do not write on/alter the cards.
- DFNS will print lunch cards for newly enrolled students, and replacements for lost/damaged cards. The cards will continue to include a barcode of the Student ID.



Best Practice for the first week of school:

Allow and account for more time for meal service to support students and staff with learning ID numbers for efficient meal service.

Breakfast Meal Service

Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA) In-Classroom Breakfast Program:

The MMFA In-Classroom Breakfast Program provides state-level funding for breakfast in the classroom for all students at no charge. DFNS Supervisors will provide training to all school-based staff, including teachers, on the requirements of the MMFA program including:

- Students are required to eat in the classroom.
- Each classroom will receive a weekly accountability roster with students' names. Adults are required to check off the name of students on the accountability roster as they receive a complete breakfast.
- Second meals are prohibited

Reach out to the designated DFNS Supervisor to schedule MMFA training.

Traditional Breakfast:

Schools not in the MMFA program will offer breakfast from the serving line each morning. Students will enter their 6-8-digit student ID at the point of service.

Lunch Meal Service

Best Practices:

Please work directly with Cafeteria Managers to establish a lunch count and student card process to ensure efficiency. Recommended best practices include:

- Lunch counts may be completed through Synergy, Google Lunch Count, or other existing methods. Reference the [Lunch Count Support Guide](#) for details.
- Staff work with all students to learn their ID Numbers (same as Chrome book number) to enter at the POS and be part of an efficient meal service.
- Students should line up by grade and class when entering the meal service line.
- It's highly encouraged that 3rd–5th graders utilize their student ID when receiving lunch in the meal service line.
- Lunch Aides may support Kindergarten–2nd-grade students receiving lunch by handing students their lunch cards before entering the line.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schools

All students enrolled in CEP Schools will receive breakfast and lunch at no charge. Students should continue to use their MCPS Student ID number or lunch card in the cafeteria.

- A la carte items may still be purchased at participating elementary schools.

After-School Meal Programs

DFNS offers after-school snack and supper programs beginning on or after September 23, 2024. To request meals for after-school programs, please email the Cafeteria Manager and DFNS Supervisor for information. Program requests must be submitted 2 weeks in advance of the anticipated start date.

Other Helpful Resources

Menus: [Please click here to view our menu!](#) Please note that menus are subject to change based on availability and freshness of food.

School Operations Specialist & FNS Supervisor/ Field Manager Teams: Please see Attachment D of the August 2024 Principal Memorandum.

Questions: Please contact your DFNS Supervisor or Field Manager. DFNS can all be reached at 240-740-7400 or via [email](#).

DFNS FARMS Application Support: Would your school benefit from the support of DFNS to assist families with completing FARMS applications? If so, please request support through this survey. DNFS is here to support you and your school community!

Secondary Meal Service 2024–2025

Back to the Basics Middle and High School



Overview and Purpose

The goal of Montgomery County Public School's (MCPS) Meal Programs is to provide nutritious meals, fueling students to learn each school day. All MCPS cafeterias will continue to use laptops on the serving line, also referred to as the Point of Service (POS).

Secondary Meal Service (Breakfast and Lunch)

All students will continue to use their MCPS Student ID number when going through the meal service line for breakfast and lunch.

Maryland Meal for Achievement (MMFA) Breakfast Meal Service

The MMFA In-Classroom Breakfast Program provides state-level funding for breakfast in the classroom for all students at no charge. DFNS Supervisors will provide training to all school-based staff, including teachers, on the requirements of the MMFA program including:

- Students are required to eat in the classroom.
- Breakfast may be served from Grab & Go Kiosks or the cafeteria service line as long as students take meals and eat in the classroom.
- Second meals are prohibited

Reach out to the designated DFNS Supervisor to schedule MMFA training.

Traditional Breakfast:

Schools not in the MMFA program will offer breakfast from the serving line each morning. Students will enter their 6-8-digit student ID at the point of service.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schools

All students enrolled in CEP Schools will receive breakfast and lunch at no charge. Students should continue to use their MCPS Student ID number or lunch card in the cafeteria.

- A la carte items may still be purchased at participating elementary schools.

After-School Meal Programs

DFNS offers after-school snack and supper programs beginning on or after September 23, 2024. To request meals for after-school programs, please email the Cafeteria Manager and DFNS Supervisor for information. Program requests must be submitted 2 weeks in advance of the anticipated start date.

Other Helpful Resources

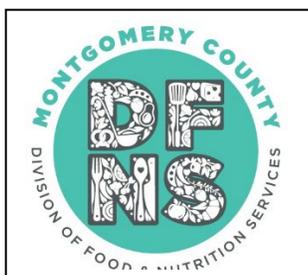
Menus: [Please click here to view our menu!](#) Please note that menus are subject to change based on availability and freshness of food.

School Operations Specialist & FNS Supervisor/ Field Manager Teams: Please see Attachment D of the August 2024 Principal Memorandum.

Questions: Please contact your DFNS Supervisor or Field Manager. DFNS can all be reached at 240-740-7400 or via [email](#).

DFNS FARMS Application Support:

Would your school benefit from the support of DFNS to assist families with completing FARMS applications? If so, please request support through this survey. DFNS is here to support you and your school community!



**Montgomery County Public Schools
Division of Food and Nutrition Services
Meal Payment Procedure Meal Policy 2024–2025**

The Montgomery County Board of Education [Policy JPH, School Food and Nutrition Services Programs](#), was adopted by Resolution No. 224-22 on May 10, 2022.

Division of Food and Nutrition Services (DFNS) ensures that all students have access to meals during the school day. Since there is a cost associated with operating these programs, it is vital to manage them in a cost-effective way. Parents/guardians are responsible for school cafeteria account balances incurred by their student(s). Payment is expected, in cash or through prepayment to the student’s school cafeteria account, at the point of sale at the time of purchase, or through an [online prepayment system](#) at any time.

Students with negative account balances will continue to receive the meal of their choice but will not be able to charge a la carte items to their meal account. Communication with parents/guardians will be respectful, private, and direct to discuss negative balances and to determine methods of payment. For students who accumulate meal charges before qualifying for Free And Reduced-price Meals (FARMS), no repayment shall be sought.

The policy outlines meal payment procedures and the repayment of negative balances incurred by students in the cafeteria as follows:

- Schools and the Division of Food and Nutrition Services (DFNS) will continue to collect payments from families to reduce overall debt as much as possible.
- Schools and DFNS will regularly communicate negative balances to parents through the following steps:
 - Cafeteria managers will print cafeteria account statements with negative balances and provide them to designated school staff members to be sent home by the school via parent email, by USPS mail, or sent home with the student (weekly at the elementary level and biweekly at the secondary level).
 - DFNS will send monthly negative meal balance reports to administrators
 - Connect-ED will be initiated at the school level once the negative balances exceed \$25. The school’s pupil personnel worker, parent community coordinator, school counselor, or administrator will contact the families to discuss the negative balances and determine if repayments are possible. Staff should engage with families in the opportunity to apply for Free and Reduced-price Meals (FARMS). Payment plans are available.
 - DFNS will conduct a direct mailing by USPS for all students with negative balances (above an identified threshold) three times per year, detailing options for payment.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2024–2025 CAFETERIA NEWS & MEALS INFORMATION

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Division of Food and Nutrition Services serves more than 18 million meals annually. We support healthy meal options for students and continually explore new ways to enhance the nutritional contribution and student acceptability of meals.

Parents/guardians are responsible for school cafeteria account balances incurred by their student(s). Payment is expected, in cash or through prepayment to the student’s school cafeteria account, at the point of sale at the time of purchase, or through an online prepayment system at any time. The cafeteria continues to offer the convenience and flexibility of a computerized cash register system. Depositing funds into a cafeteria account eliminates the need for a child to carry money every day. **All Students now use their MCPS Student Identification Number to access their account** (Schools may also utilize barcodes on student ID cards or elementary meal cards which may be scanned at the register). Any money left on a student’s account from the prior school year is available for spending. Pre-payments to a student’s account may be made prior to the start of school.

To make a prepayment:

- Use [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com), an online service to make a prepayment using a credit card. Parents can also check meal account balances, sign up for recurring payments and much more. Go to [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com) to register.
- Complete the form below and include a check or money order payable to the cafeteria. See check acceptance policy below.

To request a refund or a balance transfer for a student no longer enrolled in MCPS, email DFNSHelpDesk@mcpsmd.org

Check Acceptance Policy: Checks used to pay for meals must contain: name, address, phone number and student ID number. Returned checks are subject to recovery for the face value and Maryland State allowed fee of \$25 through an electronic debit or paper draft to the same account. Your payment by check constitutes your acceptance of these terms. If you have any questions concerning our check acceptance policy, please call CHECKredi at 1-800-239-1222.

MCPS Meals Policy

Policy JPH: Food and Nutrition Services Program outlines programs and efforts to address childhood hunger in Montgomery County, meal payment procedures, and the repayment of negative balances incurred by students in the cafeteria. For more information please visit our website.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MEAL PRICES

- **Breakfast Meal \$1.30**
- **Elementary School Lunch Meal \$2.55**
- **Middle and High School Lunch Meal \$2.80**

Children in Maryland that are approved for reduced-price meals will not be charged the cost of meals.

A LA CARTE FOODS AND BEVERAGES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE IN ADDITION TO BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

A variety of a la carte items may be available in your student’s school cafeteria. All items available for sale follow [JPG-RA, Wellness: Physical and Nutritional Health](#). Specific items vary at each school. For specific information regarding items available at your child’s school or to restrict the purchase of a la carte items, please contact your school cafeteria manager.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEAL APPLICATIONS

Families who meet certain federal income standards are eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits. All children use their student ID number so confidentiality is maintained and no child is overtly identified as receiving free or reduced-price meals. Households are encouraged to **apply online at [MySchoolApps.com](https://www.myschoolapps.com) as processing times are significantly decreased.** A paper application may also be requested from your child’s school. Only one application is needed for all students in a household. A new application must be completed annually.

PLEASE VISIT THESE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition (View menus, nutritional info and more)
- [www.MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com) (make prepayments to meal accounts, view account balances and transaction history)
- [www.MySchoolApps.com](https://www.myschoolapps.com) (apply for Free or Reduced-price Meals (FARMS))
- **Call 1-800-332-6347 or visit <https://dhs.maryland.gov/>** (Info on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Women, Infant, and Children Program (WIC), and medical programs)

PREPAYMENT FORM

Please make the check payable to your child’s school cafeteria (example: Arcola Elementary Cafeteria). Checks used to pay for school meals must contain an address and phone number. Please put your child’s first name, last name and Student ID number on the front of the check. This check is for cafeteria purchases ONLY. Please list each student separately and bring payment to the cafeteria manager. Thank You!

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Parent’s/Guardian’s Name _____ Phone Number _____

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2024–2025 CAFETERIA NEWS & MEALS INFORMATION

For Schools Participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Division of Food and Nutrition Services serves more than 18 million meals annually. We support healthy meal options for students and continually explore new ways to enhance the nutritional contribution and student acceptability of meals. DFNS is excited to announce that 60 schools are participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and will have access to breakfast and lunch at no charge each day. We encourage students to eat breakfast and lunch at school to fuel them to learn for the day. A list of CEP schools and more information on the CEP program can be found on the MCPS website.

A LA CARTE FOODS AND BEVERAGES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE IN ADDITION TO BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

A variety of a la carte items may also be available in your student's school cafeteria. All items available for sale follow *JPG-RA. Wellness: Physical and Nutritional Health*. Specific items vary at each school. For specific information regarding items available at your child's school or to restrict the purchase of a la carte items, please contact your school cafeteria manager.

Payment is expected, in cash or through prepayment to the student's school cafeteria account, at the point of sale at the time of purchase, or through an online prepayment system at any time. The cafeteria continues to offer the convenience and flexibility of a computerized cash register system. Depositing funds into a cafeteria account eliminates the need for a child to carry money for a la carte purchases. **Students use their MCPS Student Identification Number to access their account** (Schools may also utilize barcodes on student ID cards or elementary meal cards which may be scanned at the register). Any money left on a student's account from the prior school year is available for spending. Pre-payments to a student's account may be made prior to the start of school.

Check Acceptance Policy: Checks used to pay for meals must contain: name, address, phone number and student ID number. Returned checks are subject to recovery for the face value and Maryland State allowed fee of \$25 through an electronic debit or paper draft to the same account. Your payment by check constitutes your acceptance of these terms. If you have any questions concerning our check acceptance policy, please call CHECKredi at 1-800-239-1222.

To make a prepayment:

- Use [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com), an online service to make a prepayment using a credit card. Parents can also check meal account balances, sign up for recurring payments and much more. Go to [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com) to register.
- Complete the form below and include a check or money order payable to the cafeteria. See the check acceptance policy below.

To request a refund or a balance transfer for a student no longer enrolled in MCPS, email DFNSHelpDesk@mcpsmd.org

PLEASE VISIT THESE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition (View the list of CEP Schools, menus, nutritional info and more)
- [www.MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com) (make prepayments to meal accounts, view account balances and transaction history)
- For information on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Women, Infant, and Children Program (WIC), and/or medical programs, please call 1-800-332-6347 or visit <https://dhs.maryland.gov/>



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

PREPAYMENT FORM FOR A LA CARTE ITEMS IN THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Please make the check payable to your child's school cafeteria (for example: Gaithersburg High School Cafeteria). Checks used to pay for a la carte items must contain an address and phone number. Please put your child's first name, last name, and Student ID number on the front of the check. This check is for cafeteria purchases ONLY. Please list each student separately and bring payment to the cafeteria manager. Thank You!

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Student Name _____ ID Number _____ Amount \$ _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name _____ Phone Number _____