

**2010-2011**

Parent Handbook  
For the School Lunch Program

Norwood City Schools

*The Norwood Department of Food & Nutrition Services Partnering with Parents to Encourage a Healthy School Nutritional Environment, Promote Good Food Choices, and Support Healthy Activity among our growing school age children.*

# Food & Nutrition Services Administrative Staff

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## Norwood School Kitchens

|                            |                |          |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------|
| High/Middle School.....    |                | 924.2885 |
| Primary Elementary.....    | Beth Rodriguez | 924.2563 |
| Sharpsburg Elementary..... | Brenda Dunn    | 924.2910 |
| View Elementary.....       | Kim Cole       | 924.2615 |
| Williams Elementary.....   | Brenda Schmidt | 924.2889 |

## Food & Nutrition Services Mission Statement

It is the mission of Food & Nutrition Services to make a significant contribution to the overall physical and mental well-being of each student to enable them to participate fully in the education process. This will be achieved by providing wholesome, high quality, nutritious and appetizing school lunches served in a courteous manner, in a sanitary and pleasant cafeteria environment.

This mission will be pursued in the most efficient and cost effective means possible, in compliance with the guidelines of the Ohio Department of Education National School Lunch Program.

## National School Lunch Program

The Norwood School district participates in the National School Lunch Program. Under this program all schools who participate must make free and reduced price meals available to eligible students. The menus are designed so that over a period of one week, school lunches will provide children with approximately one-third of the nutrients they need according to the Recommended Dietary Allowances and one-fourth for breakfast. The menus are planned using available government commodity food products from the United States Department of Agriculture as well as purchased food products.

The Food & Nutrition Department strives to promote the participation in the consumption of healthy school meals offered every school day. We strive to offer age appropriate portion lunches and snacks that are appealing, acceptable, appetizing and healthy for young children.

In order to increase the acceptance and consumption of nutritious foods, we have the opportunity to use the government program “**Offer versus Serve**” option at all of our lunchrooms. This provision is intended to reduce food waste by allowing children to choose three of the five meal components offered each day. Several different choices of entrée items are offered each day, including the menu item, a variety of hot or cold sandwiches, chef salads, yogurt with fruit and cheese stick and a variety of pre-packed, grab and go “lunchable” meals. To promote milk consumption, we offer a variety of 1%, 2% and fat-free milk in chocolate, white and strawberry flavor. A variety of healthy snacks, bottled water and juices, approved by the Director of Food & Nutrition, are available for sale ala Carte.

## The Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program

Free and reduced price lunches are available to students who qualify and meet the eligibility guidelines. **Students who qualified last school year are automatically qualified through September 30 of new school year.** However, a new application must be completed by September 30<sup>th</sup> for the upcoming 2009-2010 school year. Applications will be mailed home in August, prior to school starting. If you did not receive one, call your child’s school and request that one to be sent home to you.

**Please Note: Parents are still responsible for school lunch payment until the Free or Reduced applications have been determined.**

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 received and approved in the Food Service Office.

No child is discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or handicap.

## Food for Sale Standards

The types of food sold in the schools will contribute to the daily nutritional needs of the children, provide healthy food choices and well-balanced meals and follow the dietary guidelines provided by the Department of Agriculture.

Food sold for special or extracurricular events **cannot be sold** during school lunch times **in competition** with the school meal program.

## 2009-2010 Lunch Prices

Our food service program must be self-supporting through the payment for student meals. We do our best to keep the lunch prices reasonable and offer the highest quality meals and service to your child each day.

Each meal includes five components: an entree with two - three oz. of meat or meat alternative (cheese/peanut butter/casseroles, etc.) and one-two servings of bread, a serving of fruit and a serving of vegetables (or two different fruits or two different vegetables) and an 8 oz. container of milk. To make a meal, students must take at least three of the five components. We encourage students to take all five components to receive the greater value for the cost. Extra entrées may be purchased as well as a variety of ala carte items.

The lunch price is \$1.90 at the Norwood Elementary schools.

Lunch prices for Norwood Middle and High School, are \$2.25  
Premium lunches are also available from \$2.50 up to \$4.25

For those who qualify, the price for a reduced price lunch is \$.40

Additional Milk is \$.50

School lunch pricing is subject to change with board approval.

## Ala Carte Items

Unless parents request otherwise, students are permitted to use money on their account to buy seconds of entrees offered in the cafeteria and packers may use the money on their account for milk purchases. Ala carte snack items may also be purchased from money on account or as a cash transaction but, may not be charged. **Parents may restrict their students from purchasing ala carte or place spending limits on their accounts.** High School students do not have any item or spending limits on their accounts unless requested by a parent in writing or by phone to the Food & Nutrition Service Office at 924.2885

## **How to Pay for Lunches**

*All the information you'll ever need about buying meals at school!*

The Norwood School District has a computerized point-of-sale (POS) system that makes paying for meals **SO MUCH EASIER!** Families don't need to worry about sending money every day and be concerned about it getting lost.

### **Benefits of using the Point-of-Sale (POS) System**

- √ Staff and Students receive faster service in check out lines.
- √ Full-pay, reduced, and Free Meal Status accounts are handled in the same manner.
- √ Detailed information and meal account reports available to families through the Pay-on-Line System.
- √ Accurate records for state and federal reporting purposes are generated.

### **How does the point-of-sale system work?**

Each student has his/her own STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT, complete with a student identification number/PIN. The account may be accessed by entering the ID/PIN number on a numeric keypad at the cash register station. The student's photo appears on the screen when the ID/PIN number is entered. The cashier is required to verify the student's identity before ringing the sale and an automatic withdrawal occurs from the student's meal account. Money can be deposited into the account at any time, as often as needed. We recommend pre-paying "at least" two (2) weeks in advance.

### **How do I get my student's ID/PIN number?**

A student's ID/PIN number is assigned to each student when a child is registered for school. Each school then is given a copy of student ID/PIN numbers. The student ID/PIN number is then given to the appropriate teacher assigned to the student. The teacher assists the student in learning the ID/PIN number. Then, each student is shown how to enter the appropriate ID/PIN number on the numeric keypad when purchasing a meal through the line.

### **What if someone accidentally enters the wrong number?**

Every time an account is accessed, the student name and photo will appear on the screen. The cashier will say, "Thank You, (name)". In the very unlikely event a wrong number is entered, a correction can immediately be made.

## **Why should I be interested in this system? My child never eats in the cafeteria *OR* I prefer to send cash like I have in the past.**

If your child forgets their packed lunch or lunch money, you will know that they have the ability to pay for lunch in the cafeteria if money has been deposited in their **STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT**. While, students in grades K-8 are never denied lunch, with money deposited on account in advance, your student is prepared to pay for lunch.

## **How can I pre-pay money for my child's account?**

Your student's meal account operates as a *Debit System*, meaning money should be placed on your student's meal account *prior* to the days your child needs to purchase lunch.

To ensure your child's **STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT** is properly credited, envelopes will be sent home with the student and the following information needs to be included on the envelope.

- Student Name and Student ID/PIN Number
- Student's Grade
- Homeroom Teacher
- Amount

Checks should be made payable to Norwood Schools Food & Nutrition Services.

### ***AND/OR***

We are pleased to announce our new online payment system, **MyNutriKids**. This system allows you to make online payments to your child's lunch account.

We still accept **cash or checks** at our **school offices**. **Acceptance of credit or debit cards is solely for online use.**

In order to use the **MyNutriKids.com** system, parents must first register and create an account with **MyNutriKids.com**. As part of the online registration, you will need the student's social security number. No personal information about your child is available online through the **MyNutriKids.com** system. Also, the District does not keep your credit card information on file; you will need to re-enter your credit card number each time you use the online system.

You can access the new online payment system by visiting our District website at [www.norwoodschoools.org](http://www.norwoodschoools.org). Choose the **MyNutriKids.com** logo to be transferred to the payment site. Complete the registration page, and add your child's last name and either their SS number or ID/PIN number. Payments may take up to 24 hours to post to your child's account. There will be a convenience fee charged to your credit/debit card each time this service is used. The convenience fee will be 3% of the total transaction amount.

## **May my child continue to pay cash for a lunch?**

Yes. Cashiers will accept cash. But please allow us to remind you again that when students use their meal accounts, service is much so much faster!

## **May anyone use my meal account, such as a brother or sister?**

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

## **How will I know when the meal account is getting low on funds or has a negative balance?**

You may call the appropriate school cafeteria and speak with the kitchen manager or cashier to obtain the balance on your child's STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT. Or, your child can obtain this information when purchasing a lunch through the lunch line. Or, you can go on-line through at [www.norwoodschoools.org](http://www.norwoodschoools.org) and check the balance at any time.

## **What happens when the account has a negative balance?**

At the elementary schools, Negative Balance Notices will be given to the students to take home for their parents or guardian. The parent or guardian can then replenish the STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT with any money owed, and or additional pre-pay money by using the above mentioned methods of pre-payment.

## **What is the Charging policy?**

Charging refers to any time a student does not have enough money to cover his or her meal at the point of sale. Snacks and ala carte items cannot be charged.

In the event that a student does forget their lunch money, the District has a **“2-charge-per-quarter”** policy. These charges must be paid in full each quarter.

Students with an outstanding balance, will be offered an alternate meal, a cheese sandwich and milk, for \$1.60 It is still the parent's responsibility for payment of these alternate meals. Does not apply to Free or Reduces students.

Regardless of outstanding charges incurred, students K-8, with money-in-hand, will not be denied a meal.

Negative balances will be reported to the building principal, in order to notify the student **before** getting another unpaid meal. The student will have to make alternate arrangements for lunch, i.e. contact parents, pack a lunch, etc.

Please make every attempt to replenish your students account **prior** to a \$0.00 balance. Pre-payment for meals is strongly recommended.

Account balances are the responsibility of the students and parents.

## **Can I send one check for lunch AND another activity?**

No. It is necessary that lunch money be kept separate from other school funds.

## **If my child asks for cash back will he/she get cash back?**

No. For your protection, we will not give change back to a student from a check. We want to make sure the money you sent to be used for meals goes directly for meals only.

Also, generally any change left from a cash purchase for K through 4th grade students is placed on their STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT. This service is provided in response to concerns of parents who indicated that change was lost on the playground or thrown away off the lunch tray. The change then accumulates on the account providing funds for later use. ***Of course, change will be given back to the student if requested, in writing or by phone, by the parent or guardian.***

## **What if my child still has money in his/her account at the end of the school year?**

We will carry your child's balance to the next school year. Should families move from the school district, money remaining on student meal accounts will be refunded to the parent or guardian. Please contact the Food and Nutrition office at 924.2885 for information regarding the request for a student meal refund.

## **What if my child's account shows a meal was eaten when I know that I packed a lunch?**

There have been some instances of hungry, growing kids who have eaten their home-packed lunch on the bus or on the way to school, and then eaten a school lunch meal. If the school is offering a popular menu for lunch, the child may be tempted to have lunch at school instead of eating the packed lunch. Personnel in your child's lunch room will gladly research any purchases you question and make adjustments to your child's student lunch account as necessary.

## **I don't trust computers. How do I know the records are accurate?**

We can run an account history of your child's account all the way back to the start of the school year, as well as the previous school year. We can tell you every time the account was accessed, and every time a deposit was made.

## **What if I have a question regarding my child's account or account balance?**

You may call the Food and Nutrition office at 924.2885, or contact your child's school cafeteria, and we will gladly answer any questions you have concerning your child's account. If further research is needed to answer your question, we will be sure to contact you in a timely manner.

## **When may I activate my student's meal account?**

We can accept pre-payment on a student's account on the first day of school, and or at your child's school orientation or open house. Please contact the Food and Nutrition Office at 924.2885 if you have any questions or concerns regarding the pre-payment of lunch or milk.

## **If I lost our monthly menu, how can we find out what's for lunch?**

You can check online at [www.norwoodschoools.org](http://www.norwoodschoools.org). Click on the menus and the building your child attends. Or call the School Office or Food Service Office at 924.2885 for assistance.

*We are sure you will find the POS system a real convenience!*

## **Cafeteria Manners**

Each cafeteria has adult lunchroom monitors responsible for supervising and helping the children at lunchtime. These adults are hired, trained and supervised by the school principals to monitor the Lunchrooms and encourage good eating habits and good manners during meal and play time.

Students are encouraged to use good manners in the dining room. This includes sitting at their seats until excused by the lunchroom monitor, talking softly at the table and cleaning up after themselves.

## Food & Nutrition Services Nutrition Goals

The Food & Nutrition Services Department welcomes input from the school community including parents, teachers, food service staff and school personnel through annual meetings with student council groups, focal groups and parent/staff advisory committees.

Members of the District and the Director of Food & Nutrition Services are working together to improve the nutritional integrity of the Norwood Schools' student meal programs. Together we will make changes in the lunch program that will set nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold as meals and for food sold as ala carte items.

- Improve the nutritional quality and selection of “kid appeal” school meals, offering a selection of two or more other entrées besides the menu entree and multiple offerings of vegetables and fruits along with salad daily.
- Promote and serve whole grain products whenever possible.
- Reduce children’s intake of saturated fat by making 1% or fat-free milk the standard milk available in school cafeterias.
- Oppose soft drinks, sports drinks, punches and caffeine drinks being available to elementary school age children.
- Encourage parents and kids to pack healthy lunches.
- Ensure that all snacks or side dishes sold or served in the elementary school cafeterias meet the following standards: Have 30% or less of its total calories from fat, have 10% or less of its total calories from saturated plus trans fats.
- Review and/or revise all recipes to reduce fat, sodium and calories.
- **Encourage and educate about „ageappropriate portion sizes“.**

## Suggestions for Packing Healthy Lunches

Parents are encouraged to pack healthy lunches from home or encourage their children to purchase healthy school meals. The Food & Nutrition Services Dept. is promoting the sale of school meals rather than ala carte sale of food to promote a balanced diet.

Home Pack Lunch Suggestions: (Cold, refreshing, nutritious low fat 1% milk and fat free milk can be purchased at school, along with a selection of bottled waters and 100% or 50% juice products).

- Low fat meat or cheese sandwiches served on whole grain bread, buns or wrap sandwiches.
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Low-fat yogurt.
- Low-fat cheese cubes or sticks.
- 100% or 50% juice products or bottled water.
- Pretzels, low fat crackers, bagels, small low-fat muffins, dry cereal.
- Granola Bars.
- Dried Fruit.
- Various nuts & almonds.

## Suggestions for Healthy Snacks

Healthy snacks are important because they supply nutrients for growth, provide energy and enable children to think clearer, help develop good eating habits early in life, and help to include all food groups in the daily diet.

Snacks also offer an opportunity to incorporate a variety of foods and a way to introduce new foods.

Plan snacks that include foods from more than one food group and keep portions small, they are not meant to take the place of a meal. Suggested serving size is the amount of food that fits in one cupped hand.

Involve your child in the planning and preparation of snacks and use this as an opportunity to talk about proper nutrition, portion sizes and your recommendations for your child.

Healthy snack suggestions: (most of these snack items are less than 100 calories per serving).

- Mini bagel
- Crackers
- Microwave lite popcorn
- Dry cereal
- Cereal bars
- Nutria-grain bars
- Low fat cheeses
- Banana
- Medium apple
- Pear
- Fresh Peach
- Cantaloupe cubes
- Grapes
- Orange
- Kiwi fruit
- Vegetable sticks
- Fresh broccoli & cauliflower florets
- Low-fat yogurt
- Pudding cup
- Cottage cheese
- Peanut butter & celery sticks
- Almonds
- Peanuts
- Sunflower seeds
- Small sandwiches
- Fruit kabobs
- Protein drinks
- 100% fruit juice
- Zucchini strips
- Berries
- Tomato wedges with dip
- Tangerines
- Whole grain breads or crackers
- Small muffins
- Tortillas & salsa
- Rice cakes
- Pumpkin or banana bread
- Cereal mix or trail mix
- Green, red and yellow pepper strips
- Fig Newton cookies
- Animal crackers
- Baked Doritos
- Graham crackers
- English muffin
- 100% fruit snacks
- Beef jerky-95% fat free.

# Suggestions Creative Financing & Fun Fundraising

Selling products that parents and students enjoy can be very profitable. Below is a list of suggestions for alternate fundraisers other than many of the low nutrient dense foods products that are available.

## Things you can sell

- Candles
- Greeting cards
- Gift wrap, boxes and bags
- Magazine subscriptions
- Gift items
- Coupon books
- Holiday wreaths, landscape mulch
- Flowers, bulbs, poinsettias
- Cookbooks
- Balloon bouquets
- House decorations
- T-shirts or sweatshirts
- Books, calendars
- Air fresheners
- Customized stickers
- Plants
- Pet treats/toys
- Christmas ornaments
- School spirit gear
- First aid kits
- Crafts
- Emergency kits for cars
- Temporary tattoos
- Stuffed animals
- Pocket calendars
- Raffle donations
- Coffee cups
- Mugs
- Rent a special parking space
- Foot warmers
- Flags, bumper stickers
- License plates or holders w/school logo
- Gift baskets
- Hats
- Jewelry
- Valentines
- Christmas trees
- Yearbook covers
- Mistletoe
- Yearbook graffiti
- Stadium pillows
- School Frisbees
- Garage sales
- Music, videos, CDs.

## **Healthy Food Items That Can Be Sold**

Fruit smoothies, frozen bananas, cereal, trail mix, fruit & nut baskets, lunch box auctions.

## **Items that Promote the School**

Cookbook made by school (parents, teachers, kids), bumper stickers & decals, school logo air fresheners, calendars.

## **Healthy Classroom Party Suggestions**

- Bagels
- Cheese cubes
- Fresh cut up fruits
- Fresh finger food veggies

- Salads made with pasta or vegetables
- Veggie pizza
- Tortilla wraps filled with meat or veggies
- Breakfast bars
- Cereal bars
- Oatmeal raisin cookies
- Animal crackers
- Granola bars
- Dried fruit
- Chex mix
- Rice Krispy bars
- Fruit leathers
- Popcorn
- Pretzels
- Whole-wheat tortilla w/ cream cheese & honey cut as pinwheels.

Non-food items: pencils, erasers, small notebooks, calendars, stickers, and small novelty toys.

## **Food Allergies - Important Notice**

Parents of students with allergies: The school nurses notify the cafeteria of any students with food allergies, and a copy of the doctor's order will be kept on file in the food service department, and will also be noted on our cash register system, alerting staff. A highlighted notice is put on your child's account in the dietary notes with the list of food restrictions. Please contact the school nurse if your child has any food allergies or restrictions.

Students who are lactose intolerant must have a written notice from a health care professional in order to receive a fruit drink in place of milk. USDA guidelines prohibit serving substitute drinks to students without written medical directives from a medical authority. Notes from parents requesting any beverage other than milk are not acceptable under USDA guidelines of the National School Lunch Program.