

Portland Public Schools - Food Service 101

Jane McLucas, Food Service Director

Almost 6800 students

The Food Service Program operates in:

3 High Schools

3 Middle Schools

9 Elementary School (4 of the 9 are CEP Schools)

Portland and Deering High Schools are production kitchens, which mean that they order and receive their own products, prepare, serve, and clean up in their own kitchens. We serve breakfast free to all students, and charge for lunch. Breakfast is traditional in the cafeteria. There are numerous choices at the DHS & PHS, as well as a full deli and salad bar. Each of these schools are open campus, so they are able to leave school grounds for lunch. Student lunches are \$2.95.

Casco Bay High School does not have any cafeteria facilities, we currently provide meals from Central Kitchen to the school, and set up a serving line in the hallway of the school, that includes a salad bar. We serve both breakfast and lunch in this setting.

King, Lincoln, and Moore Middle Schools each have about 500 students. Each of these schools are production kitchens, but have a limited amount of storage and equipment. In order for them to do their own production, they receive deliveries twice a week from our prime vendor. We served breakfast free to all students. King has a traditional cafeteria breakfast, while Lincoln and Moore each do breakfast in the classroom. We offer three meal choices and a full salad bar daily at lunch, and it is \$2.95 at the secondary level.

The Elementary Schools meals are made at our Central Kitchen, and shipped out each day to the elementary schools, including Peaks Island School. Meals are made and packed into individual units the day prior to service and then shipped to each school on the day of service. We also ship out the breakfasts for the following day, so they are in the school ready to go the next day. Most schools receive their meals cold, and are heated on site by food service staff, but we do heat some meals at Central Kitchen for schools without heating facilities. Each elementary school has two meal choices, and then of course, sunbutter & jelly (for our most picky customers). In addition to those choices they also have a fruit and veggie bar, which is stocked with a different fruit & vegetable each day. All elementary schools follow the same menu for breakfast and lunch. Breakfast service differs in each of the schools. Our CEP schools and Hall School use a Breakfast in the Classroom service model, while Ocean Ave used a traditional cafeteria service model, and Longfellow, Lyseth, and Peaks have a grab & go model. Elementary meals are \$2.70.

Schools with the **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** has the ability to serve all students breakfast and lunch, free of charge. This provision is based on data from the Department of Health and Human Services, and a program that we must apply for every 4 years. Currently our CEP Schools are East End, Reice, Riverton, and Presumpscot. We are in our 3rd year, and will need to reapply next school year.

All meals are planned according to the **National School Lunch Regulations**.

There are 5 components in school meals: meat/meat alternatives, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk. For lunch, we must offer all 5 components, the student must choose 3, and one of them must be a fruit or

vegetable. For breakfast, we must offer 4 items within 3 components, and a student must choose 3, of which, fruit must be one of them.

Over the course of the week, we must meet the vegetable sub group requirement, of the 5 categories of vegetables: dark green, starch, bean, orange-red, and other. We must offer at least 2 different milk choices at each meal. We serve only whole grains in the school lunch program.

The Food Service Department also offers the **USDA Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program** at four elementary schools: East End, Presumpscot, Reiche, and Riverton. Schools are chosen based on their F & R %, and applications must be approved by the Department of Education. This program is to offer students fruits or vegetables that they may not be exposed to at home. This program cannot be served in conjunction with the school meals program, so it is served in the classroom between meal periods.

Afterschool Snacks are also offered at schools with 50% or more F&R students. Students must be in a supervised, structured, enrichment program after the end of the school day. To adhere to the snack guidelines, each snack must contain two of the four components of the meal pattern: milk, fruit & veggie, grain, or meat/meat alternate. In addition to these requirements we have been asked not to serve liquids in the programs, to encourage the drinking of water.

The **Summer Meals Program** in Portland is covered by Opportunity Alliance and PPS. Between us we have over 20 meal sites in the city. PPS offers a cold box meal for each customer with all the components in each box. Last summer we operated 11 sites, and served over 5,000 breakfasts and 13,000 lunches over the course of 44 days.

Students may apply for or be given a benefit rate, depending on their application to either the Department of Health and Human Services or a **Free & Reduced Application**. The government then reimburses the School Lunch Program for the meals that are served to those students at the benefit rate of the student: Free, Reduced or Paid. In Portland, a reduced student does not pay their portion of the meal charge, the state covers the breakfast portion, and PPS covers the lunch portion.

Meal payment can be made with cash or check to school, or a credit card payment can be made online at Paypams.com for a fee of \$1.95 per student transaction.

Students may charge meals to their account. No students are refused a meal, or meals taken away, or alternate meals given. All correspondence is done with the families via school messenger, phone calls, emails, or letters via US Mail. All students started the school year with a zero balance, and we currently have a negative balance of approximately \$7,000.00.

The Food Service Program has a staff of approximately 50 people, some doing double duty by having two positions.

The goal of the program is to be self-sufficient, by operating the program on the income of the meals served. We are working hard to reach that goal, by improving meal quality, consistency of the products, accountability of staff and partners in programs, tighter controls, less waste, increasing participation and a happy work environment.