

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Food Services Department

Frequently Asked Questions

❖ ***How does the school meal service work? How does my child purchase a school meal?***

Fairfield Public Schools uses Infinite Campus as the point-of-sale system in the school cafeterias. All students have a meal account in IC which allows parents to deposit funds for the purchase of school meals and to track what is being purchased. The students access their meal account in the cafeteria by entering their student ID number on the keypad or by scanning their ID card. Cash or check are also accepted by the cashier.

❖ ***How do I pre-pay for meals?***

There are three ways to put money into your child's account:

- 1) **Cash Payments:** You can send in cash to the cafeteria manager who will enter the funds into your child's account. Cash should be in an envelope marked Fairfield School Lunch with the child's name on the envelope. There is no fee for this method of payment.
- 2) **Payment by Check:** You can send in a check to the cafeteria manager who will enter the check amount into your child's account. The check should be made payable to Fairfield School Lunch with the child's name on the check. If you have more than one child **in the same school** you can send in one check, but please clearly note the names and dollar amount that should go into each child's account. One check cannot be deposited to multiple schools. **Please note:** There is no fee for this method of payment but there is a \$15 fee for a returned check. Repayment of a returned check plus the fee is expected immediately.
- 3) **Pay Online in Infinite Campus:** When you log into IC's parent portal, click the **Food Service** tab on the left and you will see **My Accounts** and **My Cart**. Use **My Cart** to add money to meal accounts. Simply add all payments to the cart and then checkout. Use **My Accounts** to manage payment methods, recurring payments and payment history from one location. You must be logged into your IC parent portal to enter your payment method (credit/debit card or checking), not your child's or another family member's IC portal. Please see the instructions How To Pay for School Meals on the Food Services site. There is a 4% service fee for each online or recurring payment to cover the cost of bank fees.

❖ ***What are the different lunch menu options and pricing?***

Students in the **elementary** schools have 3 choices daily: the featured hot lunch, the weekly alternate, or the salad lunch. All are priced at \$3.10 for the first lunch.

Students at the **middle and high school** level have more choices. The featured hot lunch, World Market, is priced at \$3.35 in the middle schools, and \$3.40 in the high schools. The Concept stations are priced at \$4.25 and are Great American, La Cucina, Miss Ruby's Grill, Frait Express and Coyote Grill.

At **all school levels**, ala carte items are available for purchase at additional cost. A second lunch may be purchased for \$5.00, a second serving of an entrée is \$3.00, and milk can be purchase separately for \$0.55. Ala carte items **may not be charged** if a student does not have funds in their account.

❖ ***Where can I locate the school meal menus?***

Please see the menu viewing tool, **FD MealPlanner**, on the Food Services site. Please note that menus are subject to change due to product availability. We recommend that you check the menus weekly to ensure you are selecting the appropriate meal for your child.

❖ ***How can I see my child's account balance or view what they are purchasing?***

Log into your IC parent portal and select the Food Service tab. Select the account name to see the balance and a list of items that have been purchased.

❖ ***What if I see a discrepancy in my child's account?***

Please contact Food Services at (203) 255-8370 or FoodSvc@fairfieldschools.org if you would like to discuss your child's account. Please note that you must contact us within 2 weeks of the disputed transaction.

❖ ***How can I receive low balance notifications for my child's meal account?***

There are two ways to receive low balance alerts:

- 1) The district will automatically send out a low balance alert when the account balance goes below \$10.00.
- 2) You can set up your own low balance notice. Log into your IC parent portal and click the person icon in upper right corner to access **Settings**, then **Notification Settings**. Click the checkbox for **Lunch Balance is Low**. Drag the slider to the dollar amount you want to be notified once the meal account balance goes below this amount.

❖ ***Why am I getting a low balance alert?***

IC will notify parents when their child's meal account balance goes below \$10.00. You will not be alerted again unless there is a purchase made that further lowers the balance. To update your contact preferences, log into your IC parent portal and click the person icon in upper right corner to access **Settings**, then **Contact Preferences**. Check the **text** box to the right of Food Services. Click the Email tab then check the box next to Food Services.

❖ ***Why was my child not allowed to charge ala carte items today?***

If your child's account goes to a zero or negative balance, they will be provided a regular meal but funds must be deposited in your child's account to cover the cost. Ala carte items and second meals cannot be charged against a zero or negative balance.

❖ ***How do I apply for free or reduced-price meals?***

You can locate the **Free and Reduced-price School Meals Application** on the Food Services website. Please ensure your child has sufficient funds in their account to cover the cost of meals until you receive notification of their eligibility. **Please note: Ala carte items and second meals are not part of the free/reduced-price benefit.** We are not responsible for applications that do not reach the Food Services Dept. Please mail or drop off at: FPS Food Services, 501 Kings Hwy East, Suite 210, Fairfield, CT 06825 or email a copy to FoodSvc@fairfieldschools.org.

Please note: You may apply for the free and reduced-price program anytime during the school year should your income or household size change. If you are approved, the eligibility extends **only** throughout the current school year. A new application needs to be submitted at the start of each new school year.

❖ ***Why is my child incurring a charge when they are free or reduced?***

Students approved for free or reduced meals are eligible to receive **one** free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch per day. Additional meals are at the full price of \$5.00. Ala carte items are not eligible in the free/reduced program, but can be purchased at an additional cost.

❖ ***If I received a letter last school year that my child was approved for free or reduced meals, does that carry over into the next school year?***

Each **new** school year requires a **new Free and Reduced-price School Meals Application**. If you received a Direct Certification of eligibility letter last year, then submit an application only if you **do not** receive a new DC letter stating your child's latest eligibility for the new school year. Please see the **Free and Reduced-price School Meals Application** on the Food Services site.

❖ ***If my child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, how can I get fee waivers or reductions to other programs (i.e. field trips, musical instruments, testing fees, caps & gowns) in our district?***

The easiest and fastest way to demonstrate your child's eligibility for these programs is to **retain several copies of the eligibility letter you receive from Fairfield Public Schools stating your child's current school year's free or reduced status and to present this letter to the program you seek a fee reduction or waiver from**. If you wish FPS to provide information to other programs, we **must have your signed written approval** in order to share your child's eligibility status. A **Sharing Information with Other Programs** form is supplied with the Free and Reduced-price School Meals Application packet. Please complete the form, sign and submit with your application. If you are approved, the form will remain on file in Central Office. If your child is Directly Certified for free or reduced-price meals, you will receive a **Sharing Information with Other Programs** form along with your eligibility letter in the mail. Please complete the form, sign and return it to our office as soon as possible. Information will only be shared with other persons/programs **listed** on the form. Please retain a copy of this form with your child's eligibility letter. Please see the **Sharing Information with Other Programs** on the Food Services site.

❖ ***What happens to my child's meal account at the end of the school year?***

Any funds left in your child's meal account at the end of the school year will carry over to the next school year. When your child transitions to the middle or high school, their account will transition as well.

❖ ***How can I request a transfer of school meal account money from one child to another? How can I donate the balance or get a refund of my child's meal account?***

Please complete the **Meal Account Transfer, Refund or Donation Request Form** located on the Food Services site or email the required information to FoodSvc@fairfieldschools.org. The form can be mailed to FPS Food Services, 501 Kings Hwy East, Suite 210, Fairfield, CT 06825.