

PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2829 CHURCH STREET • PINE PLAINS, NEW YORK 12567-5504

TEL: (518) 398-7181 FAX: (518) 398-6592

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Meal Modifications for Students with Disabilities

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) are designed to provide participating children with access to nutritious meals. This includes ensuring that children with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from school meal programs.

Federal regulations require schools and institutions to make meal modifications at no extra charge when a child's disability restricts the child's diet in a way that prevents full participation in the school food service program without a modification.

If you believe your child needs meal substitutions or modifications because of a disability, please contact us so we can review the process with you and work with the appropriate school team members. Families must request meal modifications from the school and provide a medical statement from a State-licensed healthcare professional when required. The medical statement should include:

- Information about the child's physical or mental impairment that is sufficient for the school to understand how it restricts the child's diet;
- An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child's dietary need; and
- The food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, when applicable.

Meal modifications are made in accordance with applicable federal and State requirements and the student's documented needs. Some menu items are limited by meal pattern, crediting, sodium, saturated fat, added-sugar, and age/grade requirements; however, our team will work through the approved accommodation process to support safe, appropriate participation in school meals.

Our goal is to work with families in a safe, respectful, and confidential way so students can participate in school meals as fully as possible.

Warm regards,

Michael Angelo Dandola, C.I.A. '13

Food Service Director

Pine Plains Central School District

Office: (518) 398-7181 ext. 1351

Dear Pine Plains Families,

For the 2026-2027 school year, all students in all Pine Plains schools will continue to receive one breakfast and one lunch each school day at no cost through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). No application is required to receive these meals.

Our Food Service Vision for 2026-2027

We will continue building on the foundation established this year: scratch recipes custom-developed for Pine Plains CSD, more BBQ and farm-to-table style food, expanded local procurement, and menus designed with student wellness, energy, and focus in mind.

Our kitchen motto this year is to keep asking: "This is good, but how can it be better for our students and community?"

Additional Purchases and Household Income Forms

Additional meals may be purchased at the following current rates: Breakfast \$2.00 at all schools; lunch \$2.75 at Cold Spring Early Learning Center and Seymour Smith; and lunch \$3.25 at Stissing Mountain Junior/Senior High School. A la carte items are not covered by CEP and are available for purchase separately.

Even though meals are free for all students, we encourage every family to complete the annual household income verification form. This form helps the District secure funding and may qualify families for additional benefits.

Nutrition Standards, Compliance, and Portions

Pine Plains CSD must follow USDA and NYSED requirements for the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These standards apply across PreK-12 and include specific meal pattern requirements by age and grade group, required food components, whole grain-rich requirements, calorie ranges, sodium and saturated fat limits, and added-sugar standards.

For the 2026-2027 school year, families may notice continued adjustments to some menu items because schools must follow product-based added-sugar limits for breakfast cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk; whole grain-rich requirements; sodium standards; and grade-appropriate serving requirements. These requirements are not district preferences or an attempt to take food away from students. They are federal and state program rules that all participating school meal programs must follow.

At the same time, our commitment is to feed students well within those guidelines. Last year, we increased portion sizes where applicable and allowable within compliance, and we will continue to do so whenever possible. When the regulations allow us to offer a larger portion, a heartier scratch recipe, more local produce, or a better-balanced plate, we will. Our focus is to meet the requirements while making meals as generous, satisfying, nutrient-dense, and student-friendly as possible.

Local Food, 30% NY, and Community Partnerships

Pine Plains CSD will continue expanding local procurement through the 30% NY Initiative and through relationships with New York farms, producers, and food partners. This work supports students, local agriculture, and the regional food economy.

We will continue to work closely with NYSED Child Nutrition, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Farm to School, and professional culinary partners including The Culinary Institute of America.

Scratch Cooking, Whole-Animal Education, and Student Wellness

Students will see more scratch-cooked meals, house-made sauces, seasonal sides, BBQ-inspired menus, and farm-to-table recipes. We will also continue expanding high-quality proteins, including beef, chicken, pork, venison, duck, game, and fish, as availability and procurement guidelines allow.

Where appropriate, we will explore whole-animal and large-primal procurement with age-appropriate butchery demonstrations and educational opportunities. All purchasing, preparation, and service will remain aligned with nutrition, safety, and procurement requirements.

Our menus will continue to use a thoughtful, science-informed bioenergetics framework, which considers how food combinations can support energy, nutrient absorption, and overall wellness. We do not make medical claims or provide dietary advice; we use these principles to design meals that are flavorful, balanced, and purposeful.

Find Your Focus in Our Kitchens

This year, Find Your Focus will become part of our kitchen mission and daily culture. Our pillars are:

- Precision
- Purpose
- Passion
- Pacing
- Presence
- Personal Growth
- Persistence
- Patience
- Perspective.

Every meal is an opportunity to care for students, support families, and strengthen the Pine Plains community. Thank you for supporting the continued growth of our food service program.

Warm regards,

Michael Angelo Dandola, C.I.A. '13

Food Service Director

Pine Plains Central School District

Office: (518) 398-7181 ext. 1351

Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

email:

program.intake@usda.gov