
OCS School Nutrition Update

Summer Meals Program Update and Meal Pricing for 2026-2027 School Year

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June 15, 2026



ENGAGE. CHALLENGE. **INSPIRE.**

Summer Food Service Program



Program Information

- 10 Host Sites
- 10 sites are open to the public
- Employing 15 School Nutrition employees
- All sites approved to offer meals at “no cost” to participants
- 2 service models
 - Daily meals
 - Multi-day meal box pick up

Reimbursement Rates

- \$3.1975 for Breakfast
- \$5.600 for Lunch
- \$1.325 for Snack



Meal Service Options

Available to all children 18 & younger. Additional details may be found on the OCS and No Kid Hungry websites, and by calling 1-866-3-HUNGRY.

Daily Meal Service for Open Sites

- No registration required
- Must be consumed onsite
- Hot and cold options, based on menu
- Meal modifications (w/medical form)
- Milk alternatives available upon request

OCS Sponsored Camps

- Breakfast, lunch and Snack provided (varies per site)
- Operational dates: June 15 – August 7, 2026

Multi Day Meal Boxes

- Breakfast and lunch for 5 days
- Meal modifications require an approved medical form
- Pre Registration preferred, forms available onsite
- Registration will be verified
- Operational dates: June 22–July 29, 2026
- Pick up times and dates are site specific
 - New Hope – Monday, 11:00am – 12:30pm
 - Pathways – Tuesday, 11:00am – 12:30pm
 - Gravelly Hill – Wednesday, 3:30pm – 5:00pm



SunBucks

US Department of Agriculture (USDA) program that provides grocery buying benefits to buy nutritious food during the summer month when schools are out.

Back for Summer 2026

- One-time \$120 per eligible child on debit-like card
- Benefits issued by NCDHHS
- Cards will be mailed mid-May through end of summer



Who is eligible?

- OCS students who are directly certified or have a current, approved meal application on file will be pre-registered
- **Important:** This does not apply for children in schools where all students get free meals (CEP schools); however, they could be automatically eligible if they participate in any of the programs listed on the NCDHHS website.
- To determine eligibility, take the interactive *"eligibility quiz"* on NCDHHS website

Application and information regarding cards can be found on NCDHHS website



School Nutrition Program

SY 2025-2026

SY 2025-2026 Highlights

New Certifications, and New Products!

- Summer Professional Development Training—NCDPI K-12 Culinary Institute at Cedar Ridge High School
 - **N.C. K-12 Culinary Institute workshops** are hosted by various North Carolina School Food Authorities and facilitated by the N.C. K-12 Culinary Institute team
 - **Chef Ambassadors of OCS**—Valerie Newman, Mickiala Fuentez, Donetta Evans, Yvette Rivera, and Grace Brantley
- Farm to Fork Program—Firsthand Foods
 - Purchased Fresh Beef Patties (500 lbs) from David Pope, D&D Cattle Company, of Cedar Grove, North Carolina
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)
 - Serves a fruit and vegetable during the school day two (2) times a week
 - **CES, ECGES, GAB, NHES, PES**



SY 2025-2026 Highlights

Administrative Review, Preliminary Results

- Conducted April 13, 2026 through April 16, 2026
- Comprehensive mandatory 5-year audit conducted to ensure School Food Authorities comply with USDA regulations for school meal programs.
- Areas of Review
 - Meal Nutritional Quality (meet dietary regulations)
 - Meal Access (are meals served to eligible students)
 - Resource Management (financial integrity)
 - General Program Compliance (civil rights, food safety, local wellness policy and competitive food standards)



SY 2025-2026 Highlights

New Certifications, and New Products!

- Recommendations
 - Training staff on records and report and cooking practices
 - Increasing participation
 - Effective implementation of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

- **The preliminary report noted no fiscal action.**



Recommending Price Increase (\$.10) for SY 2026-2027

Orange County Schools Nutrition Meal Prices

Years in Review

		2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Paid Breakfast	PreK-5	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost
	6-12	\$1.40	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75
Reduced-Price Breakfast	All	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost
Paid Lunch	PreK-5	\$2.45	\$2.75	\$2.75	\$2.75
	6-12	\$2.95	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25
Reduced-Price Lunch*	All	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
Adult Meals	Breakfast	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte
	Lunch	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte



* Dependent on state funding

Nutrition Service Meal Prices, District Comparisons

2025-2026 Meal Prices		Orange County Schools	Wake County Schools	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (Food Management Company)	Chatham County Schools	Alamance County Schools
Paid Breakfast	PreK-5	No Cost	\$2.00	\$1.75	\$2.50	\$2.00
	6-12	\$1.75	\$2.25	\$1.75	\$2.50	\$2.00
Reduced-Price Breakfast	All	No Cost	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30
Paid Lunch	PreK-5	\$2.75	\$3.75	\$2.75	\$4.00	\$3.10
	6-12	\$3.25	\$4.00	\$3.25	\$4.00	\$3.10
Reduced-Price Lunch*	All	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
Adult Meals	Breakfast	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte
	Lunch	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte	À la carte



* Dependent on state funding

Reality: School Nutrition Program Challenges

- Surging food and supply costs
- School enrollment, participation levels, profit and loss status
- Section 205 of the Healthy Hunger Free Act establishes federal equity in school lunch pricing



Reality: School Nutrition Program Challenges

Surging Food and Supply Costs

- **Inflation and specialized K-12 supply chain challenges**
 - Dramatic increase in wholesale prices of ingredients, produce, and packaging
- **Upcoming new federal dietary mandates**
 - More scratch cooking and whole foods
 - Drives up labor and ingredient costs compared to processed alternatives
 - Reduction in sugar will increase food costs



Reality: School Nutrition Program Challenges

Meal Participation Comparisons Year Over Year

	July 2024-March 2025	July 2025-March 2026
Breakfasts	206,404	183,088
Lunches	360,563	324,818
Afterschool Snacks	33,197	35,491



Reality: School Nutrition Program Challenges

Profit and Loss Status

	Revenues	Expenses	Profit and Loss Status
March 2024	\$228,762.80	\$311,741.47	(\$82,978.67)
March 2025	\$391,250.92	\$349,901.30	\$41,433.20
March 2026	\$352,188.96	\$380,007.69	(\$27,818.73)



Solutions/Opportunities to Self-Sustaining

Increase Revenue

- Increase meal prices
- Increase meal participation
 - Breakfast and Lunch
- Increase meal participation, especially the Community Eligibility Provision Schools (4)
- Increase efforts to extend Free and/or Reduced Price student eligibility status
- Increase à la carte sales
 - Smart Snack Sales

Decrease Expenses

- Food Cost: Changes are being made to streamline the entrée offerings
- Increase use of USDA Commodities, use Commodity Processing of Raw Products
- Monitor labor costs at all schools
- Increase inventory monitoring and efficiency



Proposed Meal Prices 2026-2027

Recommendation: To approve a meal price increase of \$.10 for the 2026-2027 school year and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) sites for 2026-2027.

Breakfast Meal Prices

School	Reduced Price**	Paid Price*
Elementary	No cost	\$1.85
Middle	No cost	\$1.85
High School	No cost	\$1.85

Lunch Meal Prices

Site	Reduced Price**	Paid Price*
Elementary	\$0.40	\$2.85
Middle	\$0.40	\$3.35
High	\$0.40	\$3.35

CEP School Sites –

- Central Elementary
- Efland Cheeks Global Elementary
- New Hope Elementary
- Partnership Academy
- A.L. Stanback Middle (**New**)
- Gravelly Hill Middle (**New**)
- Grady A. Brown Elementary (**New**)

30-day Grace Period for students transitioning from CEP to Non-CEP schools:

- After October 6, 2026, a meal application will be required to continue benefits



*Listed prices reflects \$.10 price increase

**Dependent on state funding



Questions?



