

## **Food Facts from the Café**

Due to the ongoing budget process in Lansing, funding at this time for the Michigan School Free Meals for all students has not been determined for this coming school year. There will be free meals for students **until September 30, 2025**, which is when the state of Michigan's fiscal year ends. Beginning on October 1, 2025 families will have to begin paying for their students breakfast and lunches. Meal prices will be determined once we are closer to the September 30<sup>th</sup> date.

Meal Prices are as follows **UNTIL SEPTEMBER 30, 2025**

Elementary School Breakfast - \$ 0 (Breakfast Start time determined by building served until 8:45 am)

Ala Carte second breakfast - \$ 1.50

Elementary School Lunch - \$ 0

Ala Carte second lunch - \$ 2.75 (Charge for a complete second lunch)

Ala Carte Entrée - \$2.75 (Charge for students who bring home lunch and want just an entrée)

Extra Entrée - \$1.50 (Charge for students who "purchase" lunch and want an extra serving of the entrée)

Milk - \$ .60

All meals will still require students to have at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable when they go through the register. Students will also be able to purchase ala carte items as long as they have money in their food service account. No charging of ala carte items into the negative is permitted.

Breakfast is served at all PPS schools every day school is in session. Breakfast will be served on the first day of school, Monday, August 25th.

School meals are healthy, affordable, and deliciously convenient! Did you know that your student might qualify for free or reduced-price meals? The application only takes a few minutes to complete. Your information will be kept safe and confidential and will only be used to determine your students' meal eligibility. Education and Nutrition Benefit applications are now available for this school year and **benefits from the previous school year will expire on Oct. 7th**. Parents are encouraged to apply online at <https://portage.familyportal.cloud> to avoid long delays in processing of applications.

Are you hungry and want to see what's for lunch? Need carb counts? Want to know how many calories your favorite school lunch has? Have a food allergy and need to find a safe meal? Then check out Portage's exclusive Nutrislice website! <https://portageps.nutrislice.com> or download the app to your smart phone and have the info at your fingertips each day before lunch!

Low Balance Email Alerts – tired of last minute texts or emails asking for lunch money? Sign up for our low balance email alerts. When your student's balance falls below \$5, you will receive an email that lets you know you need to replenish funds on their account. You can sign up at <https://portage.familyportal.cloud> .

Lunch Money – Yes, your student can pay cash for his or her ala carte items each day, or they can bring in a check or cash to put on account, but did you know you can add money to your student’s lunch account electronically? Simply sign on to <https://portage.familyportal.cloud>, setup your account (you will need their student ID number—also known as their “Other ID” in Skyward), and then you can add funds, see their order history, set up email low balance alerts, and even transfer funds if you have more than one student.

Allergies - If your student has an allergy or intolerance please complete the MDE Special Diet Request form located on the Food Service page on the district’s website. Your family physician will need to complete this document and then it will need to be returned to the food service office in the administration building. For more detailed info, please contact Susan Livingston at [slivingston@portageps.org](mailto:slivingston@portageps.org) or call 269-323-5154.

Looking for a part-time job that fits into your student’s school schedule? The food service department is hiring. Apply online at <https://careers.compass-usa.com> search by location of Portage, Michigan.

Speaking of lunch money, even though one meal is free we still have to make you aware of our charging policy . . .

**Meal Charge Policy**

**Ala carte entrees, extra entrees, second meals, beverages or cartons of milk are never allowed to be charged into the negative.** Students must pay off any negative balances that carried over before being allowed to purchase ala carte items.

**Negative Balance Policy**

Negative balances are required by law to be paid to the Food Service Department by the end of each school year. At the end of the year all outstanding negative balances will be forwarded to the district Business Office to begin collection proceedings.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Susan Livingston, Director of Dining Services at 323-5154 or via email at [slivingston@portageps.org](mailto:slivingston@portageps.org).