



What's Cooking This School Year? Fan Favorites and Tasty New Menu Additions Await Students at Springfield Local Schools

From delicious meals to exciting food programs, Chartwells K12 is turning lunchtime into a can't-miss experience for students.

As summer winds down and the new school year kicks off, the dedicated food service team at Springfield Local Schools is ready to serve nutritious, delicious meals every day. These school lunch heroes do more than just fill plates – they create a welcoming space where students can refuel, connect with friends, and discover new foods they love. With a focus on fun, flavor, and interactive nutrition education, they're helping students leave the cafeteria not just full, but happier and healthier than when they walked in.

In a time of increasing food costs and inflation, school meals are an affordable and safe way for parents to remove lunch from their daily to-do list. Parents can breathe easily, too, knowing that every meal Chartwells K12 serves meets or exceeds USDA guidelines for the National School Lunch Program. That means less time worrying about what's on the tray and knowing kids are eating wholesome, well-balanced meals they enjoy.

"Good nutrition is essential for helping students stay focused, energized, and ready to learn," said Jamie Filipiak, Director of Food Service, Chartwells K12 at Springfield Local Schools. "This year, we're excited to bring back student favorites and introduce some tasty new recipes that will keep kids fueled and looking forward to mealtime."

Food Kids Love to Eat

Chartwells' passionate team of chefs and nutrition experts has been cooking up menus that not only meet rigorous nutritional standards but also reflect the diverse tastes and preferences of today's students. With a focus on flavor, variety, and wellness, the cafeteria team takes pride in serving meals that fuel students' bodies and minds all day long.

- **Dip'N to Flavor:** Whether it's crispy chicken tenders, crunchy veggie sticks, or cheesy breadsticks dipped in creamy ranch with a twist, Korean BBQ, or sriracha honey mustard, Dip'N to Flavor turns everyday favorites into lunchtime adventures with new dips for every tastebud.

Meal Cost & Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications

For the 2025-26 school year, breakfast will cost \$1.75 for elementary students/\$2.00 for secondary students and lunch will cost \$3.50 for elementary students/\$3.75 for secondary students. All families, regardless of income, are encouraged to complete and submit a short, confidential school meal application prior to the start of the school year to ensure there are no gaps in meal benefits for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Parents or guardians can submit a confidential application online at WWW.Springfield-Schools.org or in person at the school office.

Programs that Encourage Fun and Discovery

Chartwells continues to inspire healthy eating habits and spark a culinary curiosity to last a lifetime through fun and engaging programs, including:

- **Global Eats:** Highlighting the unique ingredients and authentic flavors from cuisines around the world, Global Eats brings a world of flavors to the cafeteria. Our newest signature program takes students on a food exploration that celebrates cultural heritages, traveling through China, India, Italy, Mexico, Korea, and the Caribbean.
- **Discovery Kitchen:** Designed to make nutrition education fun and entertaining, Chartwells chefs and dietitians have worked together to create curriculum that gets kids cooking, trying new foods, and learning about what they're eating. Each month has a different theme, and activities will be adapted for the current meal programs.
- **Mood Boost:** This innovative program helps elementary and middle school students connect what they eat with how they feel. It features recipes and characters that focus on six moods: Smart, Happy, Confident, Alert, Strong, and Calm.
- **Student Choice:** Giving secondary grade level students a voice in deciding what food concepts are featured and new menu items that will be available, Student Choice brings the latest food trends to school menus.
- **Power Up:** Success begins in the cafeteria as kids continue to prioritize healthy, nutritious meals that help them establish a mind-body connection and keep them energized and hydrated for whatever the day may bring. Through Power Up, students benefit from cooking demonstrations featuring recipes designed to fuel them for any activity, featuring a variety of nutritious, macro-rich ingredients.

Menus and Nutrition Facts at Your Fingertips

Chartwells K12 continues to bring technology to the forefront of the dining experience to help students and their parents prioritize healthy food choices and understand ingredients so they can help protect children from allergic reactions. Through Nutrislice, students, parents, and

faculty have access to school menus, including nutrition information, allergens, and photos. Nutrislice can be downloaded for free from the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (Android) and is available on desktop and mobile devices. Menus are also available at WWW.Springfield-schools.org

Celebrating School Lunch Heroes

Cafeteria staff are a constant source of support for students throughout their school years. These dedicated team members work hard every day to make mealtimes nutritious and enjoyable. Join the dining services staff for a family-friendly schedule (no nights or weekends), great perks, and more. Learn more or apply at WWW.Springfield-schools.org

Through sharing their passion for great-tasting food, instilling a sense of food discovery, and most importantly, providing nourishing meals, Chartwells is excited to be serving up happy and healthy to Springfield Local Schools in the year ahead.

About Chartwells K12

Chartwells K12's goal is to make sure students leave the cafeteria happier and healthier than they came in, by serving food kids love to eat and creating custom dining programs. With more than 18,000 associates in 4,500 schools, ranging from large public institutions to small charter and private schools, Chartwells K12 is built on decades of food, education, and operational experience driven by top culinary, nutrition, wellness, and sustainability talent. For more information, visit www.ChartwellsK12.com.