



## FOOD SERVICE INFORMATION GUIDE

Updated July 2024

### **Contact Information**

The food service main office is located within Macatawa Bay Middle School.

3700 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Holland, MI 49424

616-786-2100

<http://www.westottawa.net/food-service>

### **Procedures for Purchasing Meals**

The West Ottawa Public Schools Food Service Department maintains accounts for each student enrolled within the district as well as students across the ISD that are serviced by the department. The accounts are identified by the student's personal identification number that he or she receives. This ID number remains with the student during their enrollment.

The most convenient and secure way for managing your child's lunch account is to visit <http://westottawa.familyportal.cloud>, you will need to know your user id and password. This can be obtained by contacting the food service office at 616-786-2100. With Meal Magic Family Portal, you can deposit money into your child's lunch account using a debit or credit card. West Ottawa Public Schools is pleased to offer this service at no additional cost to you. The site also makes it easy to view your student's balance, monitor their daily purchases activity, and setup low balance e-mail alerts. Deposits made using <https://westottawa.familyportal.cloud> are typically available in your child's account within 5 minutes.

Payment for meals and deposits to lunch accounts can also be made using cash or check. Checks should be made payable to West Ottawa Public Schools. It is a good idea to include your child's name and the words "lunch money" in the memo section of the check. The most secure way to make cash or check payments is to visit our food service main office. Additionally, payment may be given to the building secretary or to the food service cashier during breakfast or lunch. A fee will be assessed for any returned checks.

## Meal Pricing

West Ottawa Public Schools has a tiered pricing structure based upon the age/grade of the student. For the 2024-2025 school-year, West Ottawa is participating in the Michigan School Meals Program and opted into CEP. Alternate agreement site and private school sites prices are as follows:

### Breakfast

- \$2.35 for all age/grade levels, \$.30 for reduced-priced qualifying students.

### Lunch

- South Olive Christian School and Corpus Christi Catholic School
  - \$3.00 for full pay students, \$.40 for students who qualify for reduced priced meals.

*\*The aforementioned prices are only valid when the student selects a qualifying meal. Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, a qualifying meal must include 3 of the 5 offered food components. To simplify, the students must take one of the main entrée choices and at least a ½ cup of the fruit or vegetable that is offered.*

### A La Cart Options

Milk, along with a wide variety of compliant snacks and beverages are available for additional purchase at our secondary schools (milk available at all buildings for additional purchase of \$.75). If you would like to restrict or prohibit your child from making additional purchases with their account, please contact the food service main office.

## Qualifying for Free or Reduced Priced Meals

The federal government provides financial assistance for households that meet certain size and income requirements. We encourage all families, regardless of income, to fill out the federal free and reduced priced meals application. **A new application must be filled out for each school year.** The application can be picked up in the main office of each building, the food service main office, or it can be filled out online at <https://westottawa.familyportal.cloud>. Applications can be submitted after July 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming school-year. During the 2024-2025 school year, CEP buildings families will complete the Student Benefit Form.

We strongly recommend filling out this application ahead of the start of the school year to ensure timely processing. Under federal law, ten business days are allowed for processing an application once it is received. The food service office makes every effort to process applications as quickly as possible; however, there is no guarantee an application will be processed the day it is received. Families are responsible for any meal charges that accrue during the processing period.

Once the application is processed, a letter will be sent by US or electronic mail notifying the family of their eligibility status. An application may be submitted at any time during the school-year if your family's income status changes. Additional information is available within the free and reduced priced meals application packet.

## Charge Policy

Charging for meals is strongly discouraged and places undue burden on the limited resources of the district in trying to collect money that is owed to the food service department for unpaid meal charges. That being said,

the district does recognize that unforeseeable circumstances occur and understands the strong link between proper nutrition and excellence in the classroom. To ensure students are able to eat in emergency situations, the following charge policy is approved. The policy is based upon the notion that our students are being prepared to become college, career, and life ready, and should be taking on increased responsibility for themselves as they grow older.

#### Alternate agreement sites not participating in Michigan School Meals Program

Students may charge up to the value of 3 lunches. For the 24-25 school-year, buildings not qualifying for free meals, this amounts to \$9.00 for a full pay student, and \$1.20 for a reduced-price eligible student.

In the event the student is unable to charge additional meals, an alternate meal will be provided to ensure a child does not go hungry. **When the students charge limit is reached, and they have no remaining credit, they will be offered an alternate meal still meeting the minimum requirements of the National School Lunch Program. This meal is offered on the same 5 compartment tray as any other student. The meal is not to be discarded until after the meal service has been completed and there are no students or staff in the cafeteria serving area.**

The following strategies are in place to minimize the number of students receiving alternate meals:

- The district uses <https://westottawa.familyportal.cloud> to facilitate adding money to lunch accounts. There is no additional fee to parents for using this service
- Food service cashiers are trained to notify students when their account balance is running low, and there is a need to deposit more money into the account. This is done in a private manner and not in front of other staff or students.
- Food service cashiers are trained to notify food service administrators if they observe a child receiving multiple alternate lunches. Food service administrators make every effort to contact families to get money added to accounts or to encourage families to fill out the free and reduced-price meals application.
- The Meal Charge Policy prohibits the following:
  - prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to wear a wristband or handstamp
  - prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to perform chores or other work to pay for school meals
  - prohibits the requiring of students to dispose of a meal after it has been served because the student is unable to pay for the meal or has a negative balance
  - prohibits the direct communication with a student about a negative balance unless your district has unsuccessfully attempted to contact the student's parent or legal guardian first through telephone, mail, and electronic mail
  - prohibits discussing a negative balance with a student in the presence of other students

#### Menus

West Ottawa Public Schools is pleased to provide online, interactive menus. The menus for all schools can be accessed at <http://www.westottawa.net/lunch-menus/>

Free iPhone and Android apps for our menus are available in their respective App Stores. Just search for "Menus for schools"

The interactive menu is a convenient way to find out what is for breakfast and lunch each day, and to also view what additional food and beverage items are offered at your child's school. The nutrition information for all meals, foods, and beverages is published within the interactive menu. The allergen feature of the interactive menu makes it easy to see which items may contain specific food allergens, and shows the additional offerings that are safe to eat. The build a meal feature makes it easy to calculate total nutrients, including carbohydrate counts, for the specific meal your child may eat.

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The food service program at West Ottawa Public Schools is operated under the authority of the United States Department of Agriculture in Compliance with the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act

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

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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