



Encinitas Union School District Child Nutrition Services

Our mission is to serve the highest quality, best tasting, and healthiest meals possible. We source locally grown ingredients, whole grains, responsibly sourced proteins, and organic products whenever possible. We take pride in the quality of food we create and the scratch cooking methods we use. We prepare meals that students, parents, and teachers can all agree on!

Frequently Asked Questions about the School Meal Program

What is included with a school lunch?

When participating in the school lunch program, students will get to choose: an entrée, a milk, one of any side items on the menu, and variety of fruit and vegetable sides. Students must select at least three food groups to complete their meal, one of which must be a fruit or vegetable.

How much do school meals cost?

School lunches are \$4.00 per student. School breakfast is offered daily at Ocean Knoll and Paul Ecke and is \$2.00 per student. Students may qualify for free meals at no cost, or reduced-price meals at \$0.40 per lunch and \$0.30 per breakfast. Students who qualify for free meals also receive breakfast at no cost.

Is breakfast offered at school?

Breakfast is offered daily at Ocean Knoll and Paul Ecke Central Elementary. School breakfast costs \$2.00 per student and is served before school at both sites.

Is there financial assistance available for families that need it?

Absolutely! Applications for free and reduced-price meals are available online at www.schoolcafe.com, at the school office, and in the lunch line. Families that qualify will receive meals for free or at a reduced cost of \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch. Families that qualify for free or reduced price meals may also qualify for discounts in other EUSD programs. If you believe you might qualify, please complete an application. Paper applications can be turned in at your school office or site cafeteria. Please note that applications must be renewed each school year.

Is it true that if my child qualifies for free or reduced meals, that I can also get discounts in other areas of academics?

Yes! Many organizations, programs, and providers will offer discounts to families that qualify for free or reduced meals. In order to receive benefits, families must provide a copy of their child's letter of eligibility to the program offering the benefit. Once your child qualifies, this eligibility letter will be mailed and/or emailed home to the family. This letter must be kept by the family and given to the group offering a discount in order to receive additional benefits and/or discounts.

How do I make payments for school meals?

Parents may make payments in person at the child's school site by sending a check to the school cafeteria or by making payments online. We strongly discourage sending students to school with cash. Online payments are highly encouraged and can be accessed through www.schoolcafe.com. The online system has many benefits including settings for auto-pay and email alerts for parents when their child's account is low or negative.

What if my child has no money or runs out of money?

If a student's account balance runs low or they do not have money to pay for a meal, they are allowed to charge unlimited meals to their student lunch account. In previous years, students were only allowed to charge a few meals to their student account before they would receive an alternate meal. Due to State legislation and our commitment to prevent meal shaming, students are allowed to charge as many meals as they would like to their student account.

Weekly automatic phone calls are generated and monthly letters are mailed home to alert families of any negative account balances. Negative balances can be paid online at www.schoolcafe.com, in person at your child's school site, or by sending a check to the school cafeteria. If you have any concerns about your child's lunch account, please contact the Child Nutrition Services office at 760-944-4300 x 2572.

Can students get second servings?

Students may take one trip through the lunch line each day. They can take one entrée, one milk, one side, and any fruits and vegetables offered. Due to current health restrictions, salad bars will not be offered at school sites. A variety of wrapped/packaged fruit and vegetable sides will be offered daily. When we resume the use of salad bars, students who come through the lunch line are able to choose unlimited items from the salad bar. If students are still hungry, they have the option to purchase a second meal at full price (\$4.00) or any available snacks that are for sale in the lunch line/snackbar.

Are there nutrition standards for school meals?

We meet or exceed all USDA regulations for nutritionally balanced school meals. The majority of the grains served in our meals are whole grain rich and many of the food items are made from scratch. All items are prepared in the Central Kitchen at El Camino Creek Elementary School and then freshly transported daily to each school site kitchen prior to lunch.

We offer locally sourced milk that is rBST-free with every school meal and have filtered water stations available on each school campus. In addition to beverages and entrées, each school meal comes with a trip to the salad bar stocked with a variety of seasonal produce. Much of the produce served in our school meals is locally sourced and often organic. We strive to supply at least 50% of our produce on the salad bars from our very own Certified Organic EUSD Farm Lab. We are fortunate to serve incredibly fresh and healthy meals for our EUSD students!

Where can I find the menu?

Copies of the current month's menu can be found in the front office at each school, online at www.eusd.net/child-nutrition-services/ or on the schoolcafé mobile app and website www.schoolcafe.com.

What if my student has allergies?

We encourage students with allergies to participate in the school lunch program! We ask that parents please fill out the Medical Accommodation Form, found on our website, detailing the food allergy and requested substitution. When we receive the form, we enter an alert message that will pop up on the computer screen as the child is checking out and the cashier will verify the student's food to make sure their food choices are compliant with their allergen notice.

Additional allergen information can be found in the allergen section of our webpage (www.eud.net/child-nutrition-services) or within the online menu on www.schoolcafe.com. Any specific questions or concerns can be addressed with the Child Nutrition Services Director/ Registered Dietitian, Lea Bonelli (see contact information below).

Are there vegetarian and gluten free options available?

The menu includes a vegetarian option daily and many gluten free options are offered throughout each week. Students with a gluten intolerance or allergy can also always choose a salad bar with our gluten free salad dressing.

Can I eat lunch with my child?

Yes, you may! We encourage you to visit the school lunch line with your child and see for yourself what Encinitas Child Nutrition Services has to offer. Check with the school office for more details!

Who can I contact with questions or concerns about school meals?

Please direct your questions to the Child Nutrition Services Central Office:

- General Questions, Student Account Inquiries, Application Questions, etc. contact us at 760.944.4300 x 2572 or via email at Aubrey.Stiffler@eusd.net.
- Program Inquiries, Menu Questions, Food Allergies, Complaints or any other Questions, please contact the Director of Child Nutrition, Lea Bonelli, MS RD, at 760.944.4300 x 2570 or via email at Lea.Bonelli@eusd.net.