

Autumn Funderburg
Food Service Manager
Aramark K-12 Education

August 15th, 2018

Dear Elmwood Park School District Parent:

I hope you are having a great start to the school year! The Elmwood Park Food Service staff is looking forward to serving your children nutritious, great-tasting menus that support their achievements in school and promote healthy lifestyles. Healthy for Life™ is our commitment to create healthier environments and communities, by providing comprehensive nutrition and wellness education. This year we will continue to expand the program to better serve our students and their families; and this year, as part of this expansion, we have updated the program design to better reflect the sophisticated tastes of today's students.

For your students, we offer a variety of meal choices with one goal in mind: To provide outstanding service and high quality "kid-friendly" meals that meet or exceed the latest federal and state requirements. Elmwood Park menus are designed to ensure that students receive a balanced meal, consisting of foods from all major food groups in the right proportions to meet calorie and other nutrient needs. The products and the cooking methods we use conserve food quality and nutrients, while limiting the addition of fats and eliminating frying. So, although you may see popular items like pizza and chicken nuggets on your menus, be assured that your child's school meal selections contain healthy whole grains and are lower in fat and salt than what you find in grocery stores or restaurants. We will also be offering some different foods that your children may not have tried before, so please encourage your child to taste these items. They just might become a new favorite!

- All of the breads and grain products served for breakfast and lunch are whole grain-rich, ensuring plenty of fiber and other essential nutrients. Added trans fats have been eliminated from all foods; and menus are planned to limit sodium to meet the new standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for school meals.
- The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** will continue to have age-appropriate calorie limits; offer more servings of fruits and plenty of vegetables, with a focus on nutrient-dense dark green, red/orange and legume vegetable selections; and offer a wide variety of grain and protein items.
- The **School Breakfast Program (SBP)** will also have age-appropriate calorie limits for 3 grade groups (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Schools must now offer even more fruit and/or vegetables every day, and students will have to take at least ½ cup of fruit with each breakfast meal.
- Elm Middle School and Elmwood Park High School offer a "Second Chance Breakfast" option. If you're late to school or miss breakfast our carts offer a chance to have breakfast for a healthy start to the day no matter what.
- New to our High School mix this year is the Deli Express pre-order system. Skip the lines at lunch and order your cold cut or toasted sandwich to be ready for you when you come into the cafeteria using our new convenient order form link that connects right to our kitchen! **Coming September 4th*

We will continue to post signs on each service line to show students how to select a reimbursable meal, as well as to help them understand how their choices fit into the key food groups needed to ensure a balanced approach to healthy eating.

Applications for free and reduced-priced meals are available at each school and are on a rolling review process until the last Friday of September for the respective schools. Families who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunches also qualify for the same category of breakfast.

We are proud to serve your child and encourage you to support our ongoing efforts to improve student health and well-being by participating in our Food Service program. For more information about our menus and programs, please visit <http://www.epcusd401.org> and to learn more about healthy school meals visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov> or www.myhealthyforlife.com. We hope that you and your child have a great year! Please feel free to call me at 708-583-5463 with any questions or comments.

Thank you!

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