

Meal Magic Lunch Program 101 for BC Charter School Families!

Byron Center Public School's Nutrition Services Department provides hot lunch Monday through Thursday for Byron Center Charter School students and staff. Following is a brief description of "how things work":

- ✓ Lunch costs \$2.25 for students and \$3.00 for adults. It consists of 5 items - a protein, a grain, fruit and vegetable choices and milk. The National School Lunch Program Guidelines require that a student must choose one fruit or vegetable and at least 2 other items to comply with program regulations **or they will be charged a la carte price of \$2.75 (this is applicable for free or reduced priced students also)**. We encourage students to take all five items.
- ✓ Free lunch or Reduced-priced lunch (\$.40) is available for those who qualify based upon income guidelines set by the Federal Government. Paper applications can be printed from the BCPS website (www.bcpsk12.net) or filled out online at www.lunchapp.com at any time during the school year. **Students must take a complete meal in order to receive these benefits (see previous bullet) or they will be charged the a la carte price of \$2.75.**
- ✓ Milk is included with the purchase of a full meal. If a student wants milk only it costs \$.50 per bottle for ALL students including those receiving free or reduced priced meal benefits.
- ✓ Each student has a lunch account whether or not they purchase school meals. Preorder lunches using the order forms provided with the monthly menu. **Free students must also preorder lunches**. We do not assume a free student wants a lunch each day and do not provide a lunch for a student without an order for it.
- ✓ **Byron Center Public Schools is requiring all deposits and payments be made online to avoid cash handling in schools**. Sending a check or cash to school with your student can result in lost funds! The policy is meant not only to protect our employees but also to protect parents/families from dealing with lost checks or cash.
 - ◆ Make deposits to student accounts online at www.sendmoneytoschool.com using an E-check or a debit or credit card. **THIS IS A FREE SERVICE FOR PARENTS**. You will need your student's Meal Magic ID# to set up an account. Please call Susan Meyer at 878-6115 if you are unable to use this online service.
- ✓ **Parents now have even more control over their student's meal account! Parents can subscribe to low-balance emails through the Send Money to School (SMTS) web site** at www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Reminders are sent whenever balances fall below the notification levels set by parents. Here's how to set this up:
 - ◆ Log in to SMTS. If you haven't used the site yet you will need your student's ID number.
 - ◆ Click on "Your Account"
 - ◆ Click on "Update Preferences"
 - ◆ Check "Yes, I want to receive reminders"
 - ◆ Choose the amount of money
 - ◆ Click on "Update Preferences"
- ✓ Lunches are entered into the computer daily after lunch is served. At that time your student's account is debited for the lunch purchase.
- ✓ If a lunch is ordered and your student is not in school because of illness the money will stay on the account.
- ✓ If a student orders a lunch and decides to not take it even though they are attending school that day, they will be charged for that lunch. Byron Center Public Schools cannot be held responsible for paying for the meal which was ordered and provided.
- ✓ If a lunch is ordered on a field trip day and not cancelled at least one day before then the lunch will be charged to your student's account.
- ✓ When school is cancelled because of inclement weather, the lunch that was planned for the snow day will be served the day school resumes. The money for that lunch will remain on your student's account.

NEW!!

(see other side)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY PARENTS

Q: Can I order my child's lunches online instead of using the paper order form?

A: No, the Meal Magic Program tracks deposits and sales, but you cannot order meals online at this time. Continue to send in your lunch orders no later than Wednesday morning of each week. Please be sure to fill out the order forms accurately and neatly with your child's lunch choices, name, teacher and grade. ALL STUDENTS (including FREE, REDUCED AND FULL-PAYING) MUST PREORDER LUNCHES OTHERWISE A LUNCH WILL NOT BE PROVIDED.

Q: Do I need to deposit the exact amount of money that is equal to the number of lunches my child has ordered?

A: No, you may deposit any amount of money you wish. Check account balances any time of day or night at www.sendmoneytoschool.com to make sure there is money on account for the lunches which have been ordered. ***PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR STUDENT HAS ENOUGH MONEY ON THEIR ACCOUNT FOR THE NUMBER OF LUNCHES ORDERED. Parents now have even more control over their student's meal account! Parents can subscribe to low-balance emails through the Send Money to School (SMTS) web site*** at www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Reminders are sent whenever balances fall below the notification levels set by parents. Here's how to set this up:

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- ◆ Check "Yes, I want to receive reminders"
- ◆ Choose the amount of money
- ◆ Click on "Update Preferences"

Q: If I order lunch on a Field Trip Day when my student is not on campus or if my student is at school but does not take the lunch which was ordered am I responsible for paying for that lunch?

A: Yes, the lunch will be charged to your student's account if it is ordered and not taken. The food has been prepared for your student. The Public Schools cannot be held responsible financially for those lunches ordered and not taken. The lunch will show up on your student's account (if you view it online) as a "Meal Ordered - Not Taken" charge of \$2.25. ***Even if your child receives free or reduced priced meals and has preordered a meal but decided not to take it he/she will be charged the full \$2.25 amount.***

Q: Do I need to order lunches for my student if they have qualified for free or reduced priced meals?

A: Yes, you do need to hand in the monthly order form to indicate which days your child would like lunch. There may be a lunch your child doesn't like and you will pack a lunch for them that day. The Public Schools does not assume a child will choose a lunch every day if they receive free meals.

Q: How do I access ***The Free and Reduced-Priced Meals Application?***

A: A new form **must** be completed each year after July 1.

- ◆ If your student received benefits at the end of the 2013 - 2014 School Year, they continue with the same benefits for the first 30 school days. **Please complete a new application prior to October 13, 2014 to continue receiving benefits for the 2014/2015 school year. Your student will be charged full price for lunch and breakfast beginning on October 14, 2014 if a new application has not been approved!**
- ◆ For faster processing of your family's application, complete the ***Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Family Application*** online at www.lunchapp.com any time after July 1, 2014. Online applications will normally be approved more quickly than a paper application.
- ◆ If you choose to **fill out a paper application (allow up to 5 days for processing)** download and print an application from www.bcpsk12.net or pick up an application at your school's office, **Only one application per family is necessary.**
- ◆ Make sure the application is completed correctly with all required fields filled in. If any information is missing, the application will be returned to you to complete which will delay processing and approval for benefits. Return the completed application to the school office.
- ◆ A letter or email will be sent telling you what benefits your family is entitled to receive. Be assured that all the information on the application remains confidential.

Note: The ***Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Family Application*** may be filled out any time during the school year if someone in your household loses a job or experiences a reduction in income. If you have any questions, comments or concerns call **Susan Meyer, Nutrition Services Director at (616) 878-6115.**