

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Food Quality/Nutrition

- 1) It appears that the nutrition level of many options needs improvement . Several of the hot lunch items have well over a full day's serving of sodium. Can this be addressed?**

A dietitian has recently reviewed the menu options, and recommended that products being purchased (for example, cheeses, sauces, and meat products) be exchanged for lower sodium options. These changes are in place in the upcoming menu cycle commencing November 1st.

- 2) Is nutritional information available for sides or just the Hot Entrees? Is total weight of the food available?**

Nutritional information is indeed available for each item, simply by clicking on the menu item in Nutrislice. The weight of each item is not listed, as serving sizes may vary slightly by grade level depending on the particular menu item (for example, chicken nuggets, manicotti, and turkey slices).

- 3) Can the amount of processed flour options for sandwiches, tortillas and buns be reduced?**

The next menu cycle will feature primarily whole grain bread options.

Food Choices

- 1) Can there be more than one hot lunch offered on a daily basis? Can plain pasta be offered?**

Due to the present challenges in preparing all meals out of single kitchen, only one hot entree is currently provided. It is our goal however to eventually be able to offer an additional hot entree. The offering of plain pasta as a stand-alone entree was discussed in our food committees last year and it was decided that this wasn't an option that would be provided. Plain pasta is available, however, when pasta and meatballs appears on the menu.

- 2) Are the photos of the lunches accurate? Many of them make the food appear not age-appropriate in size for younger children (e.g. turkey/cheese sandwich on a huge roll).**

Photos of the items on Nutrislice are not actual. Serving sizes may vary slightly by grade level depending on the particular menu item.

3) Can there be more than one salad option offered?

There is currently one type of salad offered on a daily basis which is rotated with a Bistro Box offering. We will continue to look to enhance these options as the year progresses.

4) Can options such as sushi be offered?

Sushi, along with other options, will be considered as our lunch program develops.

5) Can there be additional drink options made available?

It was decided by the food service committee that only 1% milk would be available and that students should be encouraged to bring in their own water/refillable bottle or alternative of their own choosing.

6) Can there be more “kid friendly” options such as a breakfast box with cereal, milk, bagel, and juice?

There are a variety of options on a daily basis which we have added as part of the new menu cycle. However, the food service committee recommended removal of the breakfast cereal option from the menu.

7) Are fruits and vegetables included with On The Go meals?

Yes, fruits and vegetables are included. Please let your children know they should ask for these. We have also reminded the servers to actively offer these items.

8) Can students get “seconds”?

No and yes. The Food Service Committee determined that “seconds” of the main entree would not be offered; however, students are allowed additional fruit and vegetable servings.

Ordering System

1) Can the online ordering system be improved to make it easier to order?

Nutrislice is the online ordering system for Chartwells, the District’s food service vendor. Although there have been several improvements to this system based on parent and District feedback, there are still a number of user interface and informational difficulties that remain to be solved. The improvement of this system continues to be a focus of Chartwells.

2) Why is it required to order eight days in advance? Can this be changed to real-time ordering?

This has been discussed and options are being reviewed, taking into account the lack of on-site preparation and storage space. Being able to pinpoint ordering patterns over time will assist in this endeavor.

Cost

1) Can you explain why the cost of the program seems to be high compared to programs in other Districts?

The cost of this program is being driven by the introduction of higher quality food items, expanded professional labor force, compostable products, commissary production, and transportation. In addition to this mostly unparalleled approach, the District food service is not federally subsidized, as many other Districts are.

However, the cost per lunch is already similar to or a bit lower than the lunch program that the District has replaced. The current pricing structure at all levels will be fully reviewed at year end to determine future pricing.

2) What is the cost of the different options?

We understand that determining the cost of particular items with the Nutrislice ordering system can be confusing. Chartwells is working with the Nutrislice team to make ordering easier to use and understand.

Please note that meal offerings have been updated for the menu cycle beginning November 1st. The following meals cost \$5.50:

- a) Hot Entree option including unlimited fruit and vegetables; or
- b) On the Go options (all options include unlimited fruit and vegetables):
 - Salads
 - Bistro or Snack Boxes
 - Sandwiches
 - Wraps
 - Whole Wheat Bagel Fun Lunch or Whole Grain Muffin Fun Lunch (both include organic Stonyfield yogurt and a cheese stick)
- c) A la carte Yogurt - \$1.25.

3) How are refunds or adjustments to my account processed?

Every effort is being made to ensure that students receive the lunch they ordered. If for any reason a child receives an alternate lunch, a refund/adjustment will be made upon request by emailing Tara Cook, Interim Director of Food Services, at tcook@scarsdaleschools.org.

Dietary Restrictions

1) For children with allergies, how are you ensuring that what parents order is being served to them on their trays?

The food service team is working with school nurses and a registered dietitian to assure that what parents have ordered for the students is what is being served to their children. This is done through a ticketing system and an on-site master list of students and their allergies. Staff is also instructed not to give children any food other than what is listed on their ticket.

2) Can there be more allergy-friendly menu options?

Through Chartwells, the District has hired a full-time registered dietitian to assist with the development of alternative menu options in order to meet our students' various needs. Please note that although every effort will be made to accommodate dietary restrictions, it may be impossible to meet every individual need.

Communication and Feedback

1) What is the best way to provide feedback?

The District and Chartwells welcome feedback from all stakeholders. The most direct way to provide feedback is by contacting Tara Cook, Interim Director of Food Services, at tcook@scarsdaleschools.org or Stuart Matthey, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Facilities, at smatthey@scarsdaleschools.org.

In addition, you may contact your building's PTA President who can put you in touch with your building's food service committee representative. This committee, consisting of 15 parent members District-wide, will continue to meet regularly throughout the year to discuss ways to continuously improve present operations.