

September 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We can't wait to welcome students back to the cafeteria for the 2025-2026 school year! To kick off the new year, we wanted to share a few things you and your child can look forward to when it comes to mealtime, information on meal pricing and steps to apply for free and reduced-price meals, how we manage food allergies and the documentation needed, and an inside look at the new recipes, concepts, and programs we'll be introducing this fall.

### **Food Kids Love to Eat**

Chartwells' team of chefs and dietitians are working to bring even more variety to our menus featuring new recipes with kid-approved foods. This year we're serving up:

- Soba noodles with chicken, hard-boiled egg and cilantro
- Cajun roasted pork loin with Buffalo cauliflower
- Vietnamese Pho noodle bowls

The value of school lunch is top of mind as families continue to experience inflation and growing food costs at home. In addition to giving kids the chance to try new foods and cut back on food waste, school lunch provides students with healthy, balanced, and safe meals at an affordable price, while saving families time and stress.

### **Meal Cost and Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications**

For the 2025-26 school year, breakfast will cost \$2.50, and lunch will cost \$5.25. Free or Reduced-Price Meals are available again this year to students who qualify for these benefits, but all students, regardless of family situations, are encouraged to dine in the cafeteria together.

**We encourage all families, regardless of income, to complete and submit a short, confidential school meal application prior to the start of the school year to ensure that there are no gaps in meal benefits for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals.** Parents or guardians can submit this application online at [School Lunch / School Lunch \(bergen.org\)](https://www.school-lunch.com). It's an easy and confidential way to ensure your child stays well-nourished at school. **This link will also allow you to set up a Payschools account to fund and review your child's lunch purchases.**

### **Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs**

We recognize the critical importance of our approach to supporting students and families who manage food allergy issues every day and work closely with the families of students who have food allergies and medical conditions that require a modification to their menu. Our approach involves coordination between parents and guardians, school nurses, school administrators, and food service professionals in the school's/district's food allergy and medical conditions protocol. If you would like your child to receive meal accommodations for food allergies or a medical condition impacting the diet, please contact [Scott.kallensee@compass-usa.com](mailto:Scott.kallensee@compass-usa.com) to discuss the required documentation to be submitted to your child's school.

### **Programs that Encourage Fun and Discovery**

Chartwells continues to inspire healthy eating habits and spark a culinary curiosity to last a lifetime through fun and engaging programs, including:

- **Global Eats:** Highlighting the unique ingredients and authentic flavors from cuisines around the world, Global Eats brings a world of flavors to the cafeteria. Our newest signature program takes students on a food exploration that celebrates cultural heritages, traveling through China, India, Italy, Mexico, and more.
- **Discovery Kitchen:** Designed to make nutrition education fun and entertaining, Chartwells chefs and dietitians have worked together to create curriculums that get kids cooking, trying new foods, and learning about what they're eating.
- **Student Choice:** Giving high school students a voice in deciding what food concepts are featured and new menu items that will be available, Student Choice brings the latest food trends to school menus.

Please visit [Nutrislice | Bergen County Technical Schools](https://www.nutrislice.com) to view menus or check for nutritional or allergy information. Through sharing our passion for great tasting food, instilling a desire for food discovery, and most importantly, providing nourishing meals, we're excited to continue serving up happy and healthy to your children in 2025-26.

We love hearing from parents, and your feedback is important to us. Please reach out to our team with any questions or comments. We're looking forward to a great school year!

Thank you,

**Scott Kallensee**

[Scott.kallensee@compass-usa.com](mailto:Scott.kallensee@compass-usa.com) 201-343-6000 X 8016