CONCORDIA
Lutheran Schools of Omaha

Lunch Program Parent FAQ

Questions & answers for families about the new Concordia Lutheran School lunch program in partnership with Clean Slate Food Co.

Program Overview & Enrollment

1. Why is Concordia making these changes?

The changes to the lunch program and the 1:1 school-managed device program were carefully implemented to improve services for students and families. These programs were launched following consistent survey feedback from parents over several years, including multiple surveys shared this fall. We recognize that increased costs can be a burden and have worked hard to manage costs while also delivering programming in response to parent feedback.

2. How can I sign my child up for the first semester prepaid meals option, and how will I be billed?

To sign up for daily lunch, please complete the form linked to the QR code. Billing will be will be processed monthly on your existing account.

3. Can students join the semester plan mid-semester?

We appreciate that some parents and students would like to see the program in action before making a commitment. An opportunity to sign up for September-December meals will be offered at the same semester-long cost, divided among the remaining payment options. For example, those signing up for lunch in August will pay the semester rate across four monthly payments from September to December and can begin eating on the day they sign up.

4. How do students get lunch if it is not prepaid, and how is the cost billed?

Students who purchase lunch on select days rather than through a prepaid plan will go through the line like the rest of their peers. Charges will be billed directly to the family's account, and parents will be responsible for maintaining and paying the balance.

Pricing & Prepaid Plans

The following price points shall apply for student lunches for the 2026-2027 school year.
As participation grows, the pricing will be lowered for the following years.

Lunch Costs				
K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12	Semester Pre-Pay Discount
$5.75	$6.40	$8.25	$10.40	15%

Approximate Cost per Meal with Pre-Pay Discount			
K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
$4.89	**$5.44**	**$7.01**	**$8.84**

Semester Cost Pre-Pay Discount (85 lunches first semester, 87 second semester)			
K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
$420.55	$467.85	$602.85	$760.25

Monthly Billing Pre-Pay Discount (Assumes billing over 10 months, 5 per semester)			
K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
$84.11	$93.57	$120.57	$152.05

5. Why is the cost higher than the current lunch offering costs?

Using fresh, whole ingredients and preparing meals on-site increases costs compared to traditional outsourced school lunch programs. In addition, rising food and labor costs have impacted all meal providers in recent years.

Had no changes been made, costs associated with the previous lunch vendors would also have increased. We believe this option is much more affordable, considering the healthful approach, variety of offerings, and student-led portion sizes.

For elementary students, pricing was additionally impacted by the loss of the government subsidy tied to public school lunch programs previously provided through Westside. While continuing to cater meals through Westside was considered, the menu relied more heavily on canned and processed ingredients than what parents and students indicated they preferred in recent surveys.

6. Are there refunds for missed meals if a student participates in the semester-long pre-pay program?

Prepayment covers the opportunity for that student to have lunch each day it is offered at school and provides families with consistent, predictable expenses. The monthly charge is 1/5 of the total cost of meals for the semester, and billing is the same each month, regardless of the number of school days. A refund or credit will not be issued based on a student's attendance or food choices on any given day. However, if a student is off campus for a scheduled school activity and misses lunch, Clean Slate will provide a sack lunch for their trip.

Menus & Meal Experience

7. What are examples of the daily menu offerings?

Students can expect a rotating menu of fresh, balanced meals prepared daily on campus. Each day will feature a hot entrée option alongside a self-serve salad and fruit bar with fresh vegetables, fruits, and complementary sides.

Our goal is to provide meals that students genuinely enjoy eating while also emphasizing quality ingredients, nutrition, and consistency. Examples of daily entrees include: braised beef enchiladas, homemade pizza, chicken pita sandwich, turkey club wrap, Mediterranean rice bowl, teriyaki chicken bowl, and many more!

8. Will menus be published in advance?

Yes, menus will be available for viewing in the FACTS cafeteria module prior to the first day of each month.

9. Will portion sizes be larger than the current "Clean Slate" offerings?

Yes, because the food is produced on-site, it will not be pre-portioned. Clean Slate will be able to offer larger portions to students. Additionally, for students in grades 6-12, a trip to the cold bar for salad, sandwiches, or soup is included in the meal price, allowing them to control their own portions. Second helpings are not available to students to limit food sharing and control costs for all participating students.

10. What will be on the cold buffet?

The self-service cold buffet lunch options, available to students in grades 6-12, will feature rotating items, such as salads, vegetables, fruit, cheese, and more. As participation in the program grows and exceeds 30% of eligible students, as we anticipate, there will be rotating soup and sandwich options for middle and high school students as well.

11. Is the cold buffet available to students as a separate purchase?

No, cold buffet options are only available if the daily main meal is purchased. However, a student could elect to eat only foods from the cold buffet if they do not prefer the hot entrée.

12. Are there alternative options available to elementary students who do not prefer the hot entrée?

A simple sandwich option will be available for students who do not prefer the featured entrée that day.

13.Will the Grab-and-Go or other à la carte options still be available?

There is potential to add à la carte food options in the near future, especially to provide nutritious, filling options for students before and after school. However, the Grab-and-Go offerings currently available at Concordia will not be offered next year, and, with the exception of potentially offering drink options to supplement the milk or water included with each purchased lunch, there is no plan to offer similar à la carte options during lunch in the immediate future. Clean Slate will focus their efforts on providing great service through the primary lunch program.

Accomodations

14. How will dietary restrictions and food allergies be handled?

All big 8 allergens (gluten, dairy, soy, egg, peanut, tree nut, fish, and shellfish) will be accommodated with an alternative, prepared using allergen-aware procedures designed to minimize cross-contamination. There is no extra cost for allergen-free meals, but the staff must be notified in advance. It is recommended that those with allergies participate in the prepaid plan to ensure the kitchen has enough alternative meals available.

15.Will the current free/reduced lunch program be continued or eliminated?

We desire to help families with financial need and will offer reduced pricing to all students who meet federal free or reduced-price meal income guidelines. To qualify, parents must complete a free and reduced-price meal application, which Concordia will share with families in July. Those applications must be returned and processed before pricing is extended; there is no automatic qualification for free or reduced-price meals at Concordia. The following pricing will be available to qualifying families:

Daily Cost with Reduced Pricing
- K-5 : $1.38
- 6-12: $2.40

Reduced Pricing Semester Cost
- K-5 : $108
- 6-12: $192

Reduced Pricing Monthly Billing
- K-5 : $21.60
- 6-12: $38.40

16. Will microwaves still be available for students who bring lunch from home?

Yes, one bank of microwaves will remain in the cafeteria for students who wish to warm a lunch brought from home. To accommodate on-site lunch preparation and more tables for students to eat, one current microwave counter will need to be eliminated, but we expect fewer students will use microwaves for extended periods, given the elimination of dry noodle bowl sales.

Logistics

17. Will Concordia employ the workers, or is it fully contracted?

Clean Slate will employ the workers who prepare the meals and run the meal service. Concordia staff and volunteers will assist with lunch service daily, and there will still be volunteer opportunities for parents to accrue service hours by assisting at lunch. All workers and volunteers will follow the protocols required by Concordia's child protection policy, including background checks and completion of sexual abuse prevention training.

18. Will the on-site kitchen be ready by the first day of school?

We anticipate project completion in September. However, service stations are scheduled to be in place for the first day of school, and Clean Slate has committed to providing full food service for students beginning on August 12.

19. How will food waste be limited, and what is the environmental impact of the new program?

When fully implemented, the program will be significantly more environmentally friendly than our previous program. Fuel use and waste will be significantly reduced. Lunch service will be provided on reusable dishware, deliveries will be reduced from 2-3 per day to two per week, and waste will be managed by the Clean Slate culinary team. Whenever possible, production will be adjusted daily based on participation trends to further reduce waste.

Thank you for reading through the FAQ's, and please email any questions or concerns.
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