

What's Cooking in the LCS Kitchen?

Dear Elementary Families,

I wanted to take a few minutes to share some of what has been happening in the LCS kitchen this year.

One of our goals has been simple: **serve food we would be happy to put on our own family tables.**

Over the past year, we have been steadily changing the way we prepare lunch at LCS. We are cooking much more from scratch, relying less on prepackaged and highly processed foods, and intentionally reducing our use of seed oils wherever practical, substituting olive oil or avocado oil instead. That means more of the food coming out of our kitchen is actually being prepared here—from sauces and casseroles to baked goods and other student favorites.

We are also continually working to offer meals that kids will actually enjoy eating. Our menus include familiar favorites such as pizza and mac and cheese alongside other homemade dishes, fresh vegetables, salads, fruit, and the occasional homemade dessert—made from scratch in our kitchen, not from a mix. We want lunch to be something students look forward to, while still being thoughtful about the ingredients we use.

As a mom, I also understand that feeding a family is expensive right now. Grocery prices add up quickly, and so does the time involved in packing lunches every morning. We work hard to keep our lunch program affordable while still serving a generous, satisfying meal. Our goal is for hot lunch to be a convenient option for families—not just on the mornings when there isn't time to pack a lunch, but whenever having one less meal to plan would make the week a little easier.

Don't Forget About After-School Snacks!

The kitchen is also stocked with plenty of grab-and-go options for students who need something after school. We have the traditional convenience items kids enjoy, but we have also been expanding our selection to include freshly prepared fruit and yogurt parfaits, açai smoothie bowls, and an assortment of grab-and-go sandwiches, wraps, and salads.

For families heading straight from school to a practice, games, or other activity, it can be an easy way for your child or you to grab something before you hit the road—without another stop along the way.

If your family hasn't tried hot lunch recently, I would encourage you to take another look at the menu. The kitchen has changed quite a bit, and we would love for your children to give us a try.

And please encourage them to tell us what they think! Some of our best ideas come from watching what students enjoy, listening to their feedback, and finding new ways to make school lunch better.

It is a privilege to feed your kids each day.

Warmly,

Jeanna Zajicek
Food Service Director