



Merkel Badgers School Nutrition

The Merkel ISD School Nutrition Staff looks forward to serving your student nutritious, great-tasting menus that support their achievements in school and promote healthy lifestyles!

We offer a variety of meal choices with one goal in mind: *to provide outstanding service and high quality "kid-friendly" meals that meet or exceed the latest federal and state requirements.*

Our menus are designed to ensure that students receive a balanced meal, consisting of foods from all the major food groups in the right proportions to meet calorie and other nutrient needs. In addition our nutrition education programs encourage students' development of healthy lifestyle habits and communicate the basics of good nutrition.

Throughout the school year, our Elementary school nutrition mascot, ACE and his friends, share the *Stay Healthy* wellness message through a monthly program. This year's theme is **Chef ACE!** Each month, ACE and his elementary friends will provide students with exciting educational information about fruits and vegetables. Including a healthy message on the importance of good nutrition and exercise.



The **FUEL** program features monthly menu specials, developed by our chefs and nutritionists, to generate excitement by introducing new recipes or putting new twists on popular favorites. Designed for Middle and High School students, FUEL combats menu fatigue and reinforces the connection between healthy, flavorful meals and performance at school.

We look forward to working with you to ensure all of our students are healthy and ready to learn every day. For more information about our menus and programs, please visit merkelisd.net and click the "Food Service/Cafeteria" link under the Quicklinks menu.

To learn more about healthy school meals visit www.fns.usda.gov

Thank you,

Naomi Whitby-Brown

Naomi Whitby-Brown, Director
Merkel School Nutrition

**2018/2019
is going
to be a
GREAT Year!**

MERKEL

Student Nutrition Policies

The District participates in the **School Breakfast Program** and **National School Lunch Program** and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Free and Reduced-price meals are available based on financial need or household situation. Applications are accepted any time of the year to accommodate household changes.

Information about a student's participation is confidential; however, disclosure of a student's eligibility may be made without prior notice or consent to programs, activities, and individuals that are specifically authorized access under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), which is the law that sets forth the disclosure limits for the district's child nutrition programs. A student's name, eligibility status, and other information may be disclosed to certain agencies as authorized under the NSLA to facilitate the enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. A parent's decision will not affect the child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk. *See Brin Reed or a cafeteria manager to apply for free or reduced price meal services.*



- 1. How to put money in your child's account:** Merkel ISD uses a computerized meal accounting system called **MySchoolBucks** through the district web site. Under the QUICKLINKS menu click the link for **Food Service/Cafeteria** and then the **Cafeteria Meal Payments** to redirect to the "MySchoolBucks" site and follow the instructions. You may check your student's account balance from the previous day for free, or you may add money to one or more your accounts at anytime in the system. Account deposits made before 7:00AM are available for same day use. A service fee of \$2.49 will be added to online payments.
- 2. Our cafeterias also accept payments for lunch in person or sent ahead in the morning.** If sending money for the account, please include the following information with the payment, either on an envelope for cash or on the bottom left hand corner of a check: Student(s) name, teacher/grade level. If you have students on different campuses, you will need to send cash or a check to EACH school.
- 3. Merkel ISD Charge policy:** Parents are strongly encouraged to continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student will be allowed to continue purchasing meals for up to five days or up to \$12.50, whichever occurs first, and the district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance. If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the student's meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive an alternate meal.
- 4. How á la carte items work:** Your child may purchase á la carte items with cash or the cost can be deducted from their account. The following is a sampling of á la carte items offered at the elementary level:
Baked Chips • Bottled Water • Fresh Fruit • Ice Cream • Milk • Fruit Juice
*Some items listed on the daily menu may be purchased á la carte.
Á la carte/Snack Bar items are not allowed to be charged.*
- 5. Your child's account can be customized to meet any specific instructions that you may designate by sending a letter to your school's cafeteria manager.**
You might designate one of the following examples:
• Your child may only purchase bottled water or juice.
• Your child may only purchase snacks on Fridays.
• Your child not be allowed to purchase any snacks.
If you do not wish for your child to participate in the á la carte program, you may send a letter to your cafeteria manager and your instructions will be noted on your child's account.
- 6. We welcome parents, grandparents, etc. . . to join their child for breakfast and lunch.**

For printouts of student activity, contact the School Nutrition office.



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