

DIXON PUBLIC SCHOOLS #170

"A Place to Grow"

www.dps170.org

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Margo Empen, Superintendent
Doug Stansford, Asst. Superintendent
Marc Campbell, Business Manager

Date: May 13, 2026
To: Board of Education Members
From: Margo Empen, Superintendent & Marc Campbell, Chief School Business Official
RE: Food Service Price List – FY 27

In April 2026, the Board of Education approved the 1-year contract extension for the Food Service Management Company (FSMC) contract to Whitson Culinary Group. The approval of the contract is the billing rate and the next step in the process is to approve the price list for students.

The table below represents a 5-year comparison of meal prices.

	<i>FY 26 – SY 25/26</i>	<i>FY 25 – SY 24/25</i>	<i>FY 24 – SY 23/24</i>	<i>FY 23 – SY 22/23</i>	<i>FY 22 – SY 21/22</i>	<i>FY 21 – SY 20/21</i>
Student Breakfast	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.20	\$1.00	\$0.80	\$0.80
Student Breakfast Reduced	\$.30	\$.30	\$.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30
Student Lunch Elementary	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.90	\$2.70	\$2.60	\$2.60
Student Lunch MS/HS	\$3.05	\$3.05	\$2.95	\$2.75	\$2.65	\$2.65
Student Lunch Reduced	\$.40	\$.40	\$.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
Adult Lunch	\$3.65	\$3.55	\$3.40	\$3.20	\$3.05	\$3.05
Milk	\$.65	\$.65	\$.65	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60

In accordance with federal and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) requirements under the National School Lunch Program, the District must annually review compliance with Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) provisions. The purpose of PLE is to ensure that the price charged for paid student lunches is sufficient so that federal reimbursements designated for free and reduced-price meals do not subsidize paid meals. [isbe.net]

Under current federal guidance, school districts, like Dixon Public Schools, with a positive or break-even balance in their nonprofit food service fund are exempt from mandatory paid lunch price increases for the applicable school year. Districts with a negative balance, however, are required to demonstrate compliance through the USDA Paid Lunch Equity calculation tool. [usda.gov]

Administration will annually evaluate the District's food service fund balance and pricing structure to ensure compliance with PLE requirements and will present any necessary recommendations to the Board for approval.

Dixon Public Schools, in cooperation with the community, will provide students with a comprehensive educational program that produces well-educated, self-sufficient, and involved citizens.

For the reasons above, ISBE's evaluation indicates and recommends that DPS would be in good shape NOT to increase lunch prices for the upcoming year. However, it should be noted that when it does come to time to increase price or if exemptions are NOT available for the 2027-28 school year and future years:

- Current school year, Dixon is \$1.11 behind the USDA Target Rate
- Expected 2026-27 USDA Target Rate is \$4.16
- When price increases are required, ISBE can only require a \$0.10 increase. Dixon has the discretion to increase further, but \$0.10 is the requirement.

There is no recommendation for action to be taken as the FY 27 pricing will remain consistent from the previous year: lunch pricing of \$3.00/elementary and \$3.05/middle & high school. Currently, we have not received ala carta pricing from Whitson's. The District does not have control over these prices.

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