



Foothills Community Christian School

Lunch Warm-up Program Guidelines

Dear parents/guardians and students;

In absence of a hot lunch program, Foothills Community Christian School offers a lunch warm-up program. Below is an introduction to our warm-up program and the guidelines that should be followed when utilizing it.

What is our program? The lunch warm up program is designed to offer our students an opportunity to enjoy a warm lunch that can be heated in a microwave in **3.5 minutes or less, total**. The original intent was to allow students the opportunity to bring in left overs from home in lieu of a cold lunch. We have recently expanded this to include limited types of other microwavable meals. Due to limited time, volunteer manpower and a high number of daily warm-ups, any food item that takes over 3.5 minutes total will not be allowed.

What should my student bring? Students may bring microwavable food items that take a **total of 3.5 minutes or less** to heat. This includes food items that have multiple steps such as Kid Cuisine, Marie Callender's and other frozen meals. If step one requires 1.5 minutes to heat and step two requires an additional 2 min, this is an acceptable warm up. If step one requires 2 minutes and step two requires 2 minutes this should not be sent (See Attachment A).

Please follow the below listed guidelines when sending a warm-up to school for your student:

1. All items a student brings should have their name and grade written on it. This includes any utensils, plates, bowls, condiments, that are provided and the warm-up itself. All items should be labeled to ensure they are given to the correct student.
2. Students grades 6-12 Students are responsible for supplying all needed utensils, paper plates, bowls or any other item needed to heat and consume their lunch. Supplies will not be provided. **Paper plates should be sent with any food item not in a microwavable container or prepackaged box.** This includes: Pizza Lunchables, Chicken Nugget Luchables, Pizza slices, mini corn dogs, hush puppies, pizza pockets, pizza rolls, chicken wings etc.... Please **do not send Styrofoam** plates, cups or bowls as these can-not be heated in the microwaves.
3. Applicable warm-ups should be sent in a **microwave safe, non glass container**. Please check your containers prior to sending them to school as many are not. Containers should indicate on the bottoms if they are safe. Glass containers get extremely hot and can cause burns to our volunteers and students or items to be dropped when handling.
4. All food items should be ready to consume after microwaving. Meaning items should come already cut up, peeled, and otherwise prepared. Fruit such as oranges or apples should be pre-peeled if your student is unable to peel them themselves in a timely manner.
5. If a warm up item does not have instructions or you wish for the item to be heated in a specific manner, please include those instructions with the warm up. *** **Please note** our microwaves



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vary from 700-1200 watts and may heat differently than the microwave at home. Frozen food items are typically thawed by lunchtime.

* Recommendations:

Please tape any provided utensil to each warm up (macaroni cups, boxed frozen lunches etc....) and ensure it is placed into the students warm up basket each morning.

Please ensure the students name is written on the border or back side of any paper plates provided and on utensils. *** **Sharpie marker will transfer onto food items** if written on the heating surface of a plate.

What should my student NOT bring?

1. Students should not bring any food item that takes over 3.5 min total to heat.
2. Students should not bring food items in Styrofoam such as soup from a restaurant unless a microwave safe bowl is also sent with the soup or the soup requires no heating.
3. Students should not bring food items to be heated in plastic bags as these will melt. For example, if you are sending items such as: left over pizza, pizza rolls, chicken nuggets or taquitos in a plastic Ziplock style bag you will also need to send a labeled paper plate for those to be heated on.
4. Students **should not bring warm up items in glass containers** (Attachment B) as these get extremely hot and can cause burns both to our volunteer and to our students.
5. Students should not bring **unopened canned food**. For example: Students should not send an unopened can of SpaghettiOs or soup. If a student wishes to have this type of warm up it should be brought to school in a leak proof microwavable container ready to go into the microwave or in a pre-heated thermos that requires no warm up.
6. Students should not bring items that need to be cut up. For example, a full steak. If a student wishes to bring steak the steak should be pre-cut up and sent with a plate or other microwavable safe container. This is especially important for our lower elementary kids.

What if my student's lunch doesn't require heating?

1. If your student's lunch is placed in the class warm up bin but does not require heating please label it "DO NOT HEAT".
2. Ensure that all items can be opened, peeled and if required, assembled, by your student. For example, Pizza Lunchables, these will need to be assembled by your student during their lunch and our volunteers will heat upon request. These will not be pre-assembled.
3. If an item needs to be cut or peeled and your student can not do it themselves, they should come pre peeled and pre-cut.



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What if my student's lunchbox contains a warm-up and cold lunch?

1. For younger children, please remove the warm up from the student's lunch bag and place it separately in the warm up bin. Please make sure it is labeled with the child's name and grade.
2. Place the cold lunch in the warm up bin with a "DO NOT HEAT" label on the cold lunch bag. If a cold lunch does not require refrigeration it is not necessary to place the lunch bag into the warm-up bin.

***** If warm up items are placed in lunch boxes please ensure your student knows they are there so they can remove them and get them placed into the warm-up bin. When warm-up items do not get placed into the warm-up bins in the mornings and have to be warmed after the students come into the lunchroom to eat, it can significantly decrease the amount of time they have to eat it.**

Are lunches warmed for all grades? No. Our warm-up volunteers' warm lunches for our K-5 students only.

Can my K-5 student heat their own lunch? There is one student microwave next to the lunchroom tables that students may use if they wish to heat their own lunch. This is limited to lunches that take less than 45 seconds. **K-5 students are not allowed in the coffee/microwave area of the lunchroom. This is reserved for our adult volunteers and 6-12 grade students only.**

What happens if my student forgets a utensil or paper plate? For our K-5 students, a needed lunch supply will be provided to them. Students in grades 6-12 will not have access to lunch supplies and must supply these from home. Alternatively, 6-12 students may purchase paper plates and plastic utensils from the Snack Shack when it is open.

Who can I contact if I have questions related to lunch warm-ups or volunteering in the lunchroom?

You can Contact Stephanie Semenza, Lunchroom Coordinator at 406-799-1167 or at stephanie_semenza@yahoo.com



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Attachment A

Below are some visual representations of acceptable and unacceptable lunch warm up food items.

Marie Callender's chicken pot pies = 5.5-6 heating time

Unopened canned good



Left overs 2 min



Macaroni cup 3.5 min





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Attachement B

Examples of Acceptable microwavable containers

(Please double check that all containers indicate they are microwave safe on the container. Generally, this is indicated on the bottoms and/or lids. If a container does not indicate this, we will not warm it as it may melt.)

Meal Prep containers



Paper plates



Rapid Ramen Cooker

(can also be used for other food items)

