

# How Our Hot Lunch Program Works

---

## What is Hot Lunch?

Hot Lunch is a fundraiser that gives students a fun alternative to packed lunches while raising funds for school initiatives like field trips and classroom supplies.

## How is Hot Lunch run at Cascade Heights?

The program relies on significant volunteer support. Two PAC parent volunteers coordinate vendors and handle planning, logistics, payments, and evaluation. The school admin team (Ms. Eastman, Mr. DeVita, and Ms. Kerluke) help manage deliveries, and Mr. Heighton's Grade 5/6 students distribute lunches to the school's 20 divisions. This level of school support is voluntary and not typical—at many schools, parent volunteers handle all sorting and distribution.

## How are vendors selected?

The PAC selects vendors based on three main factors:

1. **Logistics:** Orders must be labeled, sorted by division, and delivered accurately and on time.
2. **Price:** Meals must remain affordable, with a small markup added to support school fundraising.
3. **Quality:** Food must be safely prepared and reasonably popular with students.

Logistics is the top priority. Because the program depends on school support, deliveries must run smoothly without errors. Without reliable vendors, the program would require 4–5 parent volunteers every Friday to sort and distribute lunches, which is difficult to sustain.

## What is required to try new vendors?

Testing a new vendor requires 4–5 parent volunteers on-site to manage potential issues such as late deliveries, unsorted orders, or missing items. Over the past three years, many vendors struggled with these logistics.

To trial a new vendor, a team of parent volunteers—including one lead coordinator—must be available for a full term. If the vendor can consistently deliver accurately for a school of our size, they can then be scheduled without requiring parent volunteers onsite.

## What are the future plans for Hot Lunch at Cascade Heights?

- **Short term (Term 3):** Student feedback has been shared with our main caterer, Fuel Catering, which provides about 60% of our hot lunches. They've been very receptive and plan to make immediate improvements such as better insulated packaging and adjusting the mac and cheese recipe just for our school.
- **Long term:** To add new vendors, we need at least 5 parent volunteers (including one lead) available onsite to support trial runs. Parents who can help next school year are encouraged to sign up by contacting [cascadeheightshotlunch@gmail.com](mailto:cascadeheightshotlunch@gmail.com)

**If you have any questions, concerns, feedback about hot lunch**, please feel free to contact us at [cascadeheightshotlunch@gmail.com](mailto:cascadeheightshotlunch@gmail.com). As well, we encourage you to attend the in-person PAC meetings at the school library where such topics can be discussed.