



# Lunch and Learn Fact Check

Updated June 19, 2019

*Many inaccurate statements regarding Lunch and Learn have been published via local news outlets, social media, and through verbal conversations. This page has been created to correct those inaccuracies. As needed, we will continue to add Fact Check items to this page to ensure our parents/guardians, students, employees, and all other stakeholders are informed and educated about the District's research and planning process for a safe and successful Lunch and Learn program.*

*On May 17, 2019, Ms. Carrie Jones, High School Principal, sent a letter to parents/guardians providing information regarding Lunch and Learn. The letter was informative and can be found [HERE](#).*

*Please direct all questions and comments to Cindi Greco at [cmgreco@wyasd.k12.pa.us](mailto:cmgreco@wyasd.k12.pa.us).*

## **Fact Check 1:**

***"All [schools having Lunch and Learn] were wealthy school districts with close to 10 percent of students on the free lunch program, compared to West York's, which is at 50 percent."***

*York Daily Record Published 11:14 a.m. ET May 23, 2019*

Of the High Schools Researched (2017-18 data):		
	School	Economically Disadvantaged
1	Cherry Hill West HS (New Jersey)	28.4%
2	Camp Hill High School (PA)	12.2%
3	Harriton High School (PA)	13%
4	Kiski Area High School (PA)	40.6%
5	Mainland Regional High School (New Jersey)	26.2%
6	Unionville High School (PA)	6.7%
7	West York Area High School (PA)	48.1%

PA data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education Future Ready Index 2017-18

NJ data from the State of New Jersey Department of Education School Performance Reports 2017-18

The School and District administration does not feel that family income is a reason to reject a student-centered Lunch and Learn proposal. We believe every student will rise to the high expectations put before them. We are all Bulldogs!

## **Fact Check 2:**

***“West York has nearly 50% free and reduced lunch opposed to only 10 years ago having 18%”***

FACEBOOK comment, May 2019

The current (2018-19) percentage of District students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program is 53%, the rate in May 2009 was 27%.

## **Fact Check 3:**

***“Under the free lunch program, students can’t buy food a la carte.”***

York Daily Record Published 11:14 a.m. ET May 23, 2019

Free and reduced lunch status will not impact the a la carte menu selection. A la carte is defined as any food or drink item sold on a school campus that is not part of a full reimbursable meal (chips, ice cream, snacks, etc.). The District’s Food Services Department has always offered a la carte items for purchase only. Students will still be able to obtain a full lunch at the cafeteria or concession stand. A la carte items will be available for purchase at the cafeteria, concession stand, or Bulldog Bistro location.

## **Fact Check 4:**

***“The District said the goal is to empower students by giving them a voice and a choice.”***

Fox 43, May 21, 2019

As stated in the Lunch and Learn proposal presented at the May 7, 2019, Board Meeting, the following are some of the benefits of Lunch and Learn:

1. Students will have more time to meet with teachers who will provide academic assistance and enrichment.
2. Students will have opportunities to complete homework, receive tutoring help by their teacher and/or from other teachers (i.e. writing clinic/lab, math clinic/lab, etc.).
3. Students will have more opportunity to participate in a variety of clubs.
4. Students are empowered and earn the opportunity to participate in Lunch and Learn options. **Inappropriate behaviors will result in a loss of this privilege.**
5. One school stated, “It was a much needed cultural shift - kids feel the ownership and rise to the occasion.”
6. Each school we visited and contacted reported a significant decline in discipline. Several stated the number of fights drastically decreased.\*

\*Based on results from other schools implementing Lunch and Learn.

### **Fact Check 5:**

***"It's called Lunch and Learn, but there's no focus on learning."***

*York Daily Record Published 11:14 a.m. ET May 23, 2019*

As stated in the Lunch and Learn presentation at the May 7, 2019, Board Meeting, Lunch and Learn will provide academic options for all students, such as:

- Access to multiple teachers, counselors, and staff members to work with students on an individual or group basis.
- In addition to direct access to classroom teachers, the Learning Center (Library) will be staffed to provide additional academic support (writing labs, math labs, study help, test make-up, etc.).
- Teacher staffed silent-study areas will be available where students can do homework, study for a test, etc.
- Teacher staffed rooms will be available for special content areas such as Art, Music, Family and Consumer Science, and Technology Education. This will allow students more opportunities to practice, work with other students to complete group projects, music sectionals, etc.
- The offices will be open for students to take care of routine needs such as submitting paperwork, obtaining passes, etc.

### **Fact Check 6:**

***"There's just not enough teachers to be monitoring every part of that school."***

*York Daily Record Published 11:14 a.m. ET May 23, 2019*

The Lunch and Learn Committee has spent a significant amount of time researching and planning for safe conditions during the Lunch and Learn block of time. The plan includes more supervision of students during lunches than the current practice and will reduce the student:adult ratio for supervision from 47:1 to 28:1.

### **Fact Check 7:**

***"With all the teachers monitoring the halls, they won't be available to help students."***

*Parent comment, May 2019*

The high school will have 70 teachers and 7-10 additional staff members to assist during this time. Additionally, three counselors will be available to assist students during the entire 80-minute block. Three administrators and the School Resource Officer will also be available to supervise. Only half of the teachers will be off-duty and at lunch at a time. Half of them will eat lunch during L1 (1st half of L&L) and the other half will eat lunch during L2 (2nd half of L&L).

Of the teachers not eating lunch (35), half will be assigned a monitoring duty and the other half will be available to students.

It is important to note that students will only be permitted in designated common areas during Lunch and Learn. Even though all halls will be monitored by faculty, students will not be permitted to congregate in designated classroom wing hallways.

### **Fact Check 8:**

***“...parents who said their voices aren’t being heard.”***

Fox 43, May 21, 2019

Parents, guardians, students, and staff voices are welcome and have been welcome throughout the planning process. There have been opportunities for administration and the School Board Directors to have a conversation with and hear from stakeholders. The Lunch and Learn concept was mentioned in several monthly Superintendent Reports, discussed at Educational Programming Committee (EPC) meetings, and an hour-long public presentation occurred at a recent Board Meeting. Additionally, as noted in the letter from Principal Jones on May 17, 2019, an informational meeting regarding Lunch and Learn will be held on June 11, 2019, in the High School Auditorium, prior to the School Board Meeting. This meeting will allow time for questions from audience members.

### **Fact Check 9:**

***“At that meeting, the program was passed with no approval from the board...”***

Fox 43, May 21, 2019

Although the administration is not required to obtain School Board approval for pilot programs, the School Board may call this item to a vote at any public meeting.

### **Fact Check 10:**

***“And from what I hear, the school is horrible now with daily fights and bullying.”***

FACEBOOK comment on YDR article, May 2019

There are not daily fights at the high school. Administration responds to all reports and/or observations of bullying. Whereas the administration considers all inappropriate student behaviors as unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action, not all incidents are considered reportable bullying incidents as defined by applicable law and Board Policy.

**Board Policy 249** defines bullying as, “...*intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:*

1. *Substantial interference with a student's education.*
2. *Creation of a threatening environment.*
3. *Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.*

During the 2018-19 school year, there were two reportable (2) incidents of bullying at the high school. Thirteen (13) fights occurred during the 2018-19 school year. As administration worked to address the underlying reasons for fights, fewer were reported. Three (3) fights were reported during the second semester, none of which occurred in the cafeteria.

### **Fact Check 11:**

***“In a letter to parents, West York says they’ll bring on more staff for Lunch and Learn, but parents say that’s just more taxpayer money.”***

ABC 27, May 28, 2019

The letter sent to parents does not reference the hiring of any additional personnel. The full letter is available [HERE](#).

#### **Relevant Information:**

The District passed two budgets without increasing taxes (FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20). We are not increasing school real estate taxes to fund this program.

The additional equipment and food service personnel required for Lunch and Learn will be paid for out of the **Cafeteria Fund**.

- This Fund can only be used for District Food Services and can never be transferred into the General Fund.
- Food Service operates on a non-profit basis per [Board Policy 808 - Food Services](#)
- All school districts are eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program which provides reimbursement for student lunches.
- Lunch prices did not increase in the FY 2018-19 and will not increase in the FY 2019-20.

### **Fact Check 12:**

Social Media Comment, June 2019

***“Money is being “pulled” from the lunch budget to pay for extra staff and furniture. The profit made from lunches over the last 4 years is being used to upgrade and purchase equipment for the bistro, upgrades kitchen in the indoor bulldog snack bar by the gym, and furniture needed for downtime areas.”***

***“It bothers me that they are making a profit on lunches.”***

Food Services money cannot be used for anything but Food Services, a non-profit account. This account is equalized each year with no profit or loss. The District has not raised meal prices for the past two years. Upgrades made to the kitchens were budgeted for as equipment is outdated and in need of replacement.

Furniture for Lunch and Learn is only extra tables and chairs, not couches and recliners as has been rumored. Cafeteria workers are all paid from the cafeteria account, which is self-funding.

### **Fact Check 13:**

Social Media Comment, June 2019

***“They are installing 50 additional cameras at the school. Cost aside isn’t this an indicator that they anticipate needing video coverage either to help monitor the kids or to respond to problems?”***

The District is not installing 50 additional cameras. There will be a total of 50 cameras in the High School to address safety concerns.