

# **Lord Nelson PAC Hot Lunch Subsidy Policy and Procedure**

## **Purpose**

To work reasonably within the PAC's means to make the hot lunch program accessible and affordable to as many families as possible.

## **Rationale**

In the 2023/24 school year, hot lunch subsidies were relatively new to Nelson. The PAC opened the application process to all members of the school community.. From October 2023 to the end of June 2024:

- The PAC paid \$3,396.36 in hot lunches as requested through the subsidy initiative. This ensured approximately eight students received lunches. These were both full and partial subsidies.
- No families were denied access to subsidy
- \$916.90 was spent on purchasing three extra lunches on each hot lunch day, to be claimed by hungry students as needed. This practice was stopped in February.
- At the end of June 2024 the PAC had raised just over \$7,800 through the hot lunch program, which will go towards hot lunch subsidies for the 2024/25 school year
- At the end of June 2024 the PAC had received approximately \$800 in direct donations by individual families through the MunchaLunch platform to support the subsidy initiative

The hot lunch program is primarily intended to be a fun and exciting offering for the Nelson community, making life a little easier for Nelson parents, while fundraising outcomes have always been secondary. The PAC is committed to using income from the hot lunch program to make lunch more widely accessible.

As inflation and food costs continue to rise, and as the subsidy program becomes better understood, we anticipate requests for subsidy will increase in the 2024/25 school year. A clear policy is needed so that families are aware of what support is available and how to access it. Further, the policy will help the PAC be fiscally responsible by properly budgeting for the hot lunch subsidy program and ensuring it doesn't overextend itself in the new school year.

## Policy

Families who would like to participate in the hot lunch program but find it inaccessible are encouraged to apply for the subsidy program. Participation in the subsidy program is private and the Hot Lunch Coordinator will be the only PAC volunteer in contact with participants. School staff (teachers and/or administrators) may support the Hot Lunch Coordinator in connecting with families. Only MunchaLunch Master Administrators (Hot Lunch Coordinator and PAC Treasurer) have access to hot lunch payment and subsidy information.

There are two types of subsidies available:

- **Partial Subsidy:** Applicants have an idea of what would be an affordable amount per hot lunch day and the PAC covers the remainder of the owing amount.
  - For example:
    - A family with two children can contribute \$5 per hot lunch day per child (a total of \$30 per week, assuming 3 hot lunch days), and the PAC covers the remainder of the bill (a total of \$30 per week, assuming each meal is \$8)
- **Full Subsidy:** PAC covers the full cost of a family's hot lunch order

Under either type of subsidy the PAC will cover the cost of a main hot lunch item but does **not** cover the cost of a drink or a side unless this drink is included in a combo (for example, on a White Spot Day), up to **\$10/child** per hot lunch day.

The decision to accept subsidy requests and determine the type of subsidy is left to the discretion of the Hot Lunch Coordinator, in consultation with school staff (administration), the PAC Treasurer, and a second PAC Executive member. If the demand for subsidy exceeds the budgeted amount, this decision-making team will decide how to distribute the subsidy budget most equitably among as many applicants as possible. If the subsidy limit is not met, additional applications can be made through the school year if family circumstances change and/or new families are in need.

## Procedure

Families who are in need of a subsidy will complete [this google form](#) by the end of the third week of September. After the submission window is closed, the Hot Lunch Coordinator will review applications and determine how the subsidy budget will be distributed. If the demand for subsidy is greater than the budgeted funds, the Hot Lunch Coordinator will review all applications to determine the most equitable division of the subsidy budget.

Subsidized hot lunch orders are due in by the end of the first month of the term (September, January, and April). If a Special Hot Lunch Day is announced mid-term, families should connect with the Hot Lunch Coordinator to ensure the subsidy is extended to these extra days.

**For Partial Subsidies:**

1. Parents place orders for the upcoming term in MunchaLunch but do not complete the order with payment.
2. Parents immediately email the Hot Lunch Coordinator to let them know the order has been placed.
3. The Hot Lunch Coordinator applies a credit to the family's MunchaLunch account according to the agreed-upon subsidy amount.
4. Parents then pay for the remainder of their hot lunch order by the appropriate due date. In the event that this lump sum is not a practical option for the family an alternative approach will be determined.

**For Full Subsidies:**

1. Parents place orders for the upcoming term in MunchaLunch but do not complete the order with payment.
2. Parents immediately email the Hot Lunch Coordinator to let them know the order has been placed.
3. The Hot Lunch Coordinator covers the total amount in MunchaLunch.

Under either type of subsidy, orders can still be edited or canceled throughout the term. It is the responsibility of parents to inform the Hot Lunch Coordinator if these changes impact the amount owing to the account.