



# Bagged Lunch vs. School Lunch Comparison



## Do you ever wonder if it is more cost effective to pack lunch vs. buying school lunch?

Are you tired of packing your child’s lunch? Coventry Local Schools charges \$3.00 for school lunch at Coventry Elementary School, and \$3.25 for school lunch at Coventry Middle and High School, Coventry Local Schools’ lunches are created by Registered Dietitian, Mark Bindus, who has 30 years of experience at planning nutritious lunches. These nutritious lunches include whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables that your kids will eat. Coventry Food Service offers two entrée choices each day at our elementary schools (one meatless – Homemade Cheese Pizza, Homemade Cheesy Bread, etc), with two choices of fruits and two choices of vegetables and a tray treat on most days. At CMS and CHS, we offer the same two options each day (along with Whole Grain Popcorn Chicken and entrée salads as an additional daily choice) with more fresh fruit and vegetable options. In all, our lunches (and breakfasts) meet or exceed all current standards for the Federal National School Lunch Program.

Below are four packed lunch examples that would provide a comparable amount of food items and nutrients. Costs for these lunches were pulled directly from Walmart online (6-22-22).

<p><b>PACKED LUNCH EXAMPLE 1:</b>  <b>Smuckers Uncrustable PB &amp; J</b>            (4 pack for \$4.18) =\$1.05  <b>Vegetable:</b> Dippin’ Stix Baby Carrots &amp; Ranch Dip, 2.75 oz =\$1.38  <b>Fruit:</b> Motts Original Applesauce Cup (6 pack for \$2.50)=\$0.42  <b>Dessert:</b> Snackpack Chocolate Pudding Cup (\$3.27 for 12 count 3.25 oz cups)=\$0.27  <b>Drink:</b> School Milk=\$0.50  <b>Grand Total: \$3.62</b></p>	<p><b>PACKED LUNCH EXAMPLE 2:</b>  <b>Turkey &amp; Cheese Sandwich:</b>            2 slices Home Pride wheat bread (20 slices for \$3.27) =\$0.33, 2 oz Sarah Lee Honey Roasted Turkey Breast: (At \$9.63 per lb)=\$1.21, 1 slice of Kraft Singles Cheese: (At \$4.98 for 24 slices)=\$0.21  <b>Vegetable:</b> Dippin’ Stix Baby Carrots &amp; Ranch Dip, 2.75 oz =\$1.38  <b>Fruit:</b> 1 banana(49 cents /lb) =\$0.19  <b>Dessert:</b> Synder Pretzel Sticks (1 serving from \$2.99 bag)=\$0.19  <b>Drink:</b> Juicy Juice Apple Juice Box (6.75 oz juice box at \$2.98 for 8 count 6.75 oz juice) =\$0.37  <b>Grand Total: \$3.88</b></p>	<p><b>PACKED LUNCH EXAMPLE 3:</b>  <b>P3 Portable Protein Pack</b>            Turkey, Almonds Colby Jack Cheese, for a Low Carb Lifestyle, 2 oz Tray =\$1.87  <b>Vegetable:</b> Dippin’ Stix Baby Carrots &amp; Ranch Dip, 2.75 oz =\$1.38  <b>Fruit:</b> Motts Original Applesauce Cup (6 pack for \$2.50)=\$0.42  <b>Dessert:</b> Synder Pretzel Sticks (1 serving from \$2.99 bag)=\$0.19  <b>Drink:</b> Juicy Juice Apple Juice Box (6.75 oz juice box at \$2.98 for 8 count 6.75 oz juice) =\$0.37  <b>Grand Total: \$4.23</b></p>	<p><b>PACKED LUNCH EXAMPLE 4:</b>  <b>Lunchables Uploaded Turkey and Cheddar Sub Sandwich Meal Kit</b> with Pringles, Hershey’s Kisses, Absopure Water and Kool-Aid Tropical Punch Single            =\$4.24  <b>Vegetable:</b> Dippin’ Stix Baby Carrots &amp; Ranch Dip, 2.75 oz =\$1.38  <b>Fruit:</b> 1 banana(49 cents/lb)=\$0.19  <b>Grand Total: \$5.81</b></p>
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The average cost of these four packed lunches is \$4.39 per lunch and does not include napkins, utensils, and condiments. The price savings per day of buying school lunch (\$3.25) vs packing lunch is at a minimum \$1.14 per lunch x 180 school days = a costs savings of \$205.20 per year when you buy school lunches. This does not even put a value on your time (which if it took you an average of 10 minutes to pack a lunch at current minimum wage of \$9.30 per hour), would be an additional cost of \$0.93 per lunch. In all, buying school lunch vs. packing could save you more than \$350.00 per year. Save money, save time and always make sure your child has a healthy, hot lunch option.

**Coventry School Lunch makes a lot of CENTS!**