

Youth Recommendations for Improving School Conditions

Lunch Time, Space & Cafeteria Operations

Give students more time to eat, rest, and connect during lunch. Students recommended extending lunch from 30 to 45 minutes so they have enough time to travel to the cafeteria, check in, wait in line, find a seat, and still eat without rushing. Suggested schedule changes included shortening each class by two minutes, beginning school slightly earlier, creating rotating extended lunches, or staggering lunch times by grade. Students also emphasized the importance of having time to relax, talk with friends, meet with teachers, and take care of schoolwork

Sources: Molina and Keita, *Amount of Time Had for Lunch*, 2025; Marwa Hemat, *Lunch Break Issues*, 2026; Roger Sierra, *Student Representatives at ACHS*, 2026; and Valerie Garcia Sanchez, *Short School Lunches*, 2026.

Reduce cafeteria lines and waiting time. Students recommended staggering cafeteria entry by grade or class, adding more food-service stations, creating a digital meal pre-order system, reducing unnecessary Minga ID checks, rotating priority access among grade levels, and opening outdoor eating areas. They also proposed designated spaces where seniors could work on college applications, lead clubs, meet with teachers, or mentor younger students during lunch

Sources: Marwa Hemat, *Lunch Break Issues*, 2026; and Molina and Keita, *Amount of Time Had for Lunch*, 2025.

Student feedback on facilities and operations

Include students in decisions about school facilities and operations. Students recommended using surveys to gather student experiences and ideas, creating a student menu advisory group to test meals and work with Nutrition Services, and establishing a student-led committee to evaluate changes to the lunch schedule. They also identified the Student Government Association and student School Board representatives as important connections between students and school decision-makers.

Sources: Leia Hubbard, *Inclusive School Meal Options at Alexandria City High School*, 2025; Molina and Keita, *Amount of Time Had for Lunch*, 2025; Santos Sandoval, *School Facilities & Operations*, 2026; and Brown, Lewis, and Delcid Zelaya, *Intercampus Bus Transportation at ACHS*, 2025.

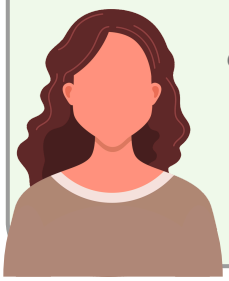
"Lunch break is not long enough... which ends up rushing [students]."

~ Marwa Hemat, 2026. Marwa's survey found 80% said lunch was not long enough



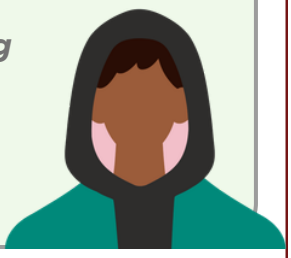
"Lunch periods should be longer and lunch lines should be made efficiently, so lines stay shorter."

~ Valerie Garcia Sanchez, 2026



"This issue focuses on the lack of student agency and participation in decision making at ACHS."

~ Roger Sierra, 2026



"The student government can help by collecting student feedback... and helping students report restroom concerns."

~ Kymberlyn Santos Sandoval, 2026

