

2019-2020

**Parent Handbook
For the School Meal Programs**

VERMILION LOCAL SCHOOLS



Food & Nutrition Services Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Vermilion Local Schools Food Service Department to fuel our student's bodies so their minds are ready for optimal learning. We are committed to serving quality nutritious food to our students daily.

National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

The Vermilion Local School district participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Under these programs all schools who participate must make free and reduced price meals available to eligible students. The menus are planned so that over a period of one week, school lunches will provide children with approximately one-third of the nutrients they need according to the Recommended Dietary Allowances and one-fourth for breakfast. The menus are planned using available government commodity food products from the United States Department of Agriculture as well as purchased food products.

The Food & Nutrition Department strives to promote the consumption of healthy meals and snacks. All food sold in the schools contribute to the daily nutritional needs of students and meet the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2011 and the dietary guidelines provided by the United States Department of Agriculture.

All A la Carte snack items sold in schools meet the new “Smart Snacks in Schools” guidelines established by the USDA in July 2014.

Lunch / Breakfast Meal Pattern

Each Lunch meal includes five components: an entree with two ounces of meat or meat alternative (beef, chicken, cheese and casseroles, etc.), one-two servings of bread, one (2 at the HS) servings of fruit, two servings of vegetables and an 8 oz. container of milk. To make a complete or combo meal, students must take at least three of the five components with one being a fruit or vegetable. We encourage students to take all five components to receive the greater value for the cost. Extra entrées may be purchased as well as a variety of a la carte items.

Each Breakfast meal includes three components with two servings of whole grain rich bread or one meat/protein and one WG bread serving (entrée), two servings of fruit and an 8 oz. milk. To make a complete breakfast all students must take a full serving of bread/meat entrée item, at least 1 serving of fruit and milk.

The Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program

Free and reduced-price lunches are available to students who qualify and meet the eligibility guidelines. The student’s eligibility status carries over from the previous year for up to 30 operating days. However, the new eligibility determination supersedes the carry over eligibility. A new application must be completed by September 30th of the current school year. Parents / Guardians of returning students can update their child’s information online. This online application replaces completing paper forms for each child every year. Instead the parent/guardian can complete necessary school forms easily and conveniently.

Direct Certification is done three times during the school year to help identify students who qualify for free meals through Job and Family Services. Letters will be sent to those families that qualify with program information and a school fee waiver. Parents who are directly certified and wish to have their school fees waived must complete the form and return it to the Operations Department or the main office of the school their student attends. All students that qualify in the household can be included on one form.

Student new to the district can apply during new student registration. Free and Reduced benefits received from other districts do not extend to Vermilion Local Schools. A new application would need to be completed. Applications are processed in three to five business days. Students are responsible for any breakfast or lunch purchases until their benefits are approved. A determination letter will be sent to the parent or guardian once completed.

Ritter Public Library offers computers for public use and a computer is available at the Administration office throughout the summer. If a parent or guardian needs assistance with completing their application an appointment can be made with the Operations Assistant at 440-204-1723.

Applications are accepted any time during the school year. Parents who have any change in employment or income during any time of the year may apply for benefits in their Parent Portal in PowerSchool.

Foster children automatically qualify for free lunch once an application is received and approved in the Operations Office.

Free and Reduced benefits are for lunch and breakfast only. Students who pack their lunch do not receive free milk. Any ala carte items would also be an additional purchase.

No child is discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or handicap.

Lunch / Breakfast Meal Prices

Our food service program is self-supporting financially through the funds received from payment for student meals. We do our best to keep the lunch prices reasonable and offer the highest quality meals and service to your child each day.

Lunch

Elementary	\$2.50	Reduced \$.40
SMS and VHS	\$2.65	Reduced \$.40

Breakfast

Elementary	\$1.60	Reduced \$.30
SMS and VHS	\$1.60	Reduced \$.30

Milk \$0.55

Ala Carte Items

Unless parents request otherwise, students are permitted to use money in their Pay-For-It account to buy additional entrees items and snacks offered in the cafeteria. Students who pack their lunch may use the money on their account for milk purchases. Students who are approved for the Free and Reduced program have to pay for milk purchases, as well as any ala carte items. **Parents may request to restrict their students from purchasing ala carte or place spending limits on their accounts** in writing or by phone. Email cakers@vermilionschools.org, or call the Operations Office at 440-204-1723.

How to Pay for Lunches

The Vermilion Local School District utilizes a computerized point-of-sale (POS) system that makes paying for meals convenient for parents and students. Families no longer need to worry about sending money with children every day. Online accounts are available so that parents may ensure the child has access to lunch money each school day.

Pay-For-It

We are pleased to announce our online payment system, Pay-For-It. This system will allow you to make online payments to your child's lunch account. Pay-For-It can also be used to pay student fees and other charges. **Cash or checks** can only be accepted at the **school office**. **The school office cannot accept credit or debit cards. Card transactions are only available through Pay-For-It.**

Pay-For-It can be accessed by visiting the school district website at www.vermilionschools.org. Click on "Quick Links" at the top of the page, then choose "Pay-For-It" from the drop-down list.

Complete the registration page, and add your child's last name and ID number (you may enter up to five children). Once you have registered and created a password, you will not need the student ID number again. Payments may take up to 24 hours to post to your child's account. A 3% convenience fee is charged to your credit/debit card each time this service is used.

Benefits of using the Pay-For-It System

- √ Staff and Students receive faster service at the register.
- √ Full-pay, reduced, and free meal status accounts are all handled in the same manner.
 - √ Detailed information and meal account reports are available to families
 - √ Accurate records for state and federal reporting purposes are generated.

How does the point-of-sale system work?

Each student has his/her own STUDENT MEAL ACCOUNT, complete with a digit personal identification number, PIN. The account may be accessed by using IDconnect Biometrics. This system is one directional. This id program creates an id number that is unique to your student. It will protect from losing or forgetting an id number or errors when students are at the point-of-sale. The student's photo appears on the screen when the student's finger is placed on the pad. The cashier is required to verify the student's identity before ringing the sale and an automatic withdrawal occurs from the student's meal account. Money can be deposited into the account at any time, as often as needed. We recommend pre-paying "at least" one week in advance. Money put on a child's account can take up to 24 hours to post.

Paying by Cash or Check in the school cafeteria.

All checks or cash for student lunches **must** be brought **to the cafeteria in the A.M.** All money will be placed on the student's lunch account. We are not able to give change to the student.

Checks should be made payable to Vermilion Local Schools. **Please write student name, building name and PIN on check.**

Account Balance Information

Notification of low or negative balances.

Parents and Guardians will be notified when their students receive a low or negative lunch account balance. Calls, emails and/or letters will be sent to the phone numbers and email addresses on file. Please keep this information current, so we can serve you better. Any change in personal information can be done in the Parent Portal in PowerSchool.

Meal Charges

Pre-payment for meals is strongly recommended.

Vermilion Local Schools will allow students to charge **lunch only**. Breakfast, milk and ala carte items are may not be charge to the student account. Parents will be notified when their student's meal balances are in the negative through a phone call, email and/or letter. A letter will be sent when the student has charged two lunches. Parents will be notified and information regarding the Free and Reduced Program will be sent after five lunches are charged. Students may not incur a charge balance of more than \$15.00 for full pay students and \$7.50 for reduced-price students. Students who reach the maximum charge limit will be given an alternative lunch. The alternative lunch will consist of a toasted cheese or peanut butter/soy butter sandwich, fruit, vegetable and milk. Any lunch charges outstanding at the end of the school year will be added to the student's fee invoice.

What if my child still has money in his/her account at the end of the school year?

All remaining balances will carry over to the next school year unless a refund is requested. No refunds will be issued on balances of less than \$ 5.00 unless the student moves from the school district for graduates. Balances for students that have left the district or have graduated will first be applied to any outstanding fee balance or transferred to a sibling account before a refund will be issued. All money remaining on student meal accounts will be refunded to the parent or guardian only. Please contact the School Office at the building your child attends for information regarding the request for a student meal refund.

Menus

All menus are published and available online at www.vermilionschools.org. Click on the menus tab and the building your child attends. Or call the School Office or Operations Office at 440-204-1723 for assistance.

Cafeteria Behavior

Adult lunchroom monitors are responsible for supervising and helping children at lunchtime. These adults are hired, trained and supervised by the school principals to monitor the lunchrooms and encourage proper eating habits and behaviors during meal and play time. Students are encouraged to use good manners in the dining room. This includes sitting at their seats until excused by the lunchroom monitor, talking softly at the table and cleaning up after themselves.

Food Allergies - Important Notice

Parents of students with allergies: The school nurses will notify the cafeteria when a student has a verified food allergy. A copy of the doctor's order will be kept on file in the food service department, and will also be noted on our cash register system to alert the staff. A highlighted notice is put on your child's account in the dietary notes with the list of food restrictions. Please contact the school nurse if your child has any food allergies or restrictions, or if you notice inaccurate information on your child's account.

Students who are lactose intolerant must have a written note from a health care professional in order to receive an alternative drink in place of milk. USDA guidelines prohibit serving substitute drinks to students without a written directive from a medical authority. Notes from parents requesting beverages other than milk are not acceptable under USDA guidelines of the National School Lunch Program.

Food & Nutrition Services Nutrition Goals

The Vermilion Local School District welcomes input from the school community, including parents, teachers, food service staff and school personnel through annual meetings with student council groups, focal groups and parent/staff advisory committees.

District staff and the Director of Operations are working together to improve the nutritional integrity of the Vermilion Local Schools' student meal programs. Together we will make changes in the lunch program that will set nutrition standards for all foods and beverages included in our standard meals, in addition to food or drink items sold as ala carte.

Food & Nutrition Services Administrative Staff

Vermilion Local Schools Operations Department

1250 Sanford Street
Vermilion, Ohio 44089

Director of Operations

James Williamson
jwilliamson@vermilionschools.org
440-204-1716

Operations Assistant

Cynthia Akers
cakers@vermilionschools.org
440-204-1723

Vermilion Local Schools Food Service Departments

Vermilion High School
Manager Amber Stolar – 440-204-1701 ext. 362
astolar@vermilionschools.org

Sailorway Middle School
Manager Sue Burchett -440-204-1702 ext. 564
sburchett@vermilionschools.org

Vermilion Elementary School
Manager Joyce Marks –440-204-1703 ext. 644
jmarks@vermilionschools.org