

2021-2022

**School Meal Program
Parent Handbook**

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 of breakfast nutrients. 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 comply with dietary guidelines provided by the United States Department of Agriculture.

All a la Carte snack items sold in schools meet the "Smart Snacks in Schools" guidelines established by the USDA in July 2014.

* Breakfast and lunch meals are free for all students in the 2021-2022 school year and are administered under the Seamless Summer Option (see page 3).

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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 to 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. The school also offers 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 whole grain 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.

NSLP Seamless Summer Option

The Vermilion Schools will provide free breakfast and lunch to all students under the Seamless Summer Option. The Seamless Summer Option combines features of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This option reduces paperwork and administrative burden, making it easier to feed children nutritious meals every school day.

Under the Nationwide Waiver to Allow the Seamless Summer Option through School Year 2021-2022, all school food authorities in States that opt in to the waiver are permitted to serve and claim meals through the Seamless Summer Option. Ohio has opted in to participation in this program. For school year 2021-2022 schools will be returning to the USDA school meal pattern, which emphasizes healthy eating with a focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and sensible calorie levels.

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH MEAL APPLICATION

While the Free and Reduced Meal Application is not required in the 2021-2022 school year, completion of the form will qualify families for other benefits, such a waiver of school fees, free school supplies and backpack weekend meals provided by Vermilion Salvation Army. Parents and/or guardians are encouraged to complete the application as quickly as possible to ensure their child(ren) are qualified for these benefits.

Adult and A La Carte Meal Prices

Adult Meal \$4.00

A la Carte Items – prices subject to change based on product availability

Extra Milk \$0.55

Unless parents request otherwise, students are permitted to use money in their PaySchools account to buy additional entrees, items and snacks when offered. Students who pack their lunch may use the money on their account for milk and other purchases.

PaySchools Central

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.

PaySchools Central

This system allows parents to easily make online payments to the student breakfast/lunch account. PaySchools can also be used to pay student fees and other school related charges. School employees are only authorized to accept payments by cash or check. The cafeteria staff and school office personnel are not able to process credit or debit card transactions. Card transactions are only available through PaySchools.

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

Parents who previously used a Pay-For-It account can use their existing login information. Parents who have never used Pay-For-It must create a new account and add the child's last name and ID number (up to five (5) children may be added to the parent account). After completing the registration and creating a password, the student ID number will remain accessible from the account. Payments may take up to 24 hours to post to a student account.

Benefits of using PaySchoolsCentral

- √ Staff and Students receive faster service at the register.
- √ Full-pay, reduced, and free meal transactions are all processed 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 6-digit personal identification number (PIN). The account may be accessed by using IDconnect Biometrics. This system is one directional. This id program creates a number that is unique to your student. This system reduces the chance of losing or forgetting an id number and/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.

Pre-payment for meals is strongly recommended. 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.

Parents may request that student accounts be restricted from additional purchases, or that spending limits be imposed on student accounts. The parent must submit their request in writing. Email cakers@vermilionschools.org if you wish to take advantage of this option. Call the Operations Office at 440-204-1723 with questions.

Paying by Cash or Check in the school cafeteria.

All checks or cash for student lunches must be brought to the cafeteria in the morning, before lunch service begins. Money received in this manner will be added to the student's lunch account. We are not able to give change back to a parent or student.

Checks should be made payable to Vermilion Local Schools. Please write student name, building name and PIN (student ID number) on the 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. For better service, please keep this information up to date in the Parent Portal in PowerSchool.

Meal Charges

Vermilion Local Schools will allow students to charge lunch only. Breakfast, milk and ala carte items are may not be charged to the student account. Parents will be notified when the 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 choice of toasted cheese or peanut butter or 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 account.

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. Parents may request a refund of the account if the student moves from the school district or graduates. Funds remaining in the PaySchools account will be applied to any outstanding school fees prior to a refund being issued.

Lunch account balances may also be 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 Operations Office at 440-204-1723 or email cakers@vermilionschools.org to request a refund.

Menus

Menus are published monthly and available on the school district website using this link: <https://www.vermilionschools.org/LunchMenus.aspx>

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 remaining seated until excused by the lunchroom monitor, talking softly at the table and cleaning up after themselves.

Food Allergies - Important Notice

Parents should notify the school nurse when a child has a food allergy. The school nurse will notify the cafeteria when the allergy is verified by a licensed physician. A copy of the doctor's order will be kept on file in the food service department and will also be noted on the cash register system to alert the staff. A highlighted notice is attached to the student account in the dietary notes section, 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 to establish 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

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