



MT. VERNON
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Food Services Directive

A guide to the policies and procedures of the Mt. Vernon Food Service Department

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I. Meal Payment

A. Forms of Payment

All cafeterias within MVCSC utilize a pre-pay computerized meal payment system (Skyward). Each student in the district has a Food Services account and all district employees also have an account. Money can be deposited into this account for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk, and ala carte foods.

There are three (3) options available for pre-payment:

- Major credit/debit card online at www.SchoolPay.com (Small, \$1.95 convenience fee charged/transaction/family)
- Cash: Please place in sealed envelope with child's name, classroom, and grade clearly written
- Check: Please place in sealed envelope with child's name, classroom, and grade clearly written
 - Make checks payable to MVCSC.
 - Check must have student's full name and school name.
 - If paying for more than one child on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each child's account

Cash/check payments may be turned into the cashier during lunch or breakfast periods, or mailed to:

ATTN: MVCSC Food Service Dept.
1806 W. SR 234
Fortville, IN 46040

B. Account Balances

All account balances are stored securely within the Skyward database at MVCSC. Account balances may be viewed through Skyward Family Access or SchoolPay. SchoolPay is simply a web portal tool to view the balances stored in MVCSC's Skyward database and make payments to student accounts. Actual money is not stored on this website. This is why all refunds and transfers must be processed at MVCSC, not at SchoolPay.

Accessing Balance Information:

Account balance information is accessible to parents in the following ways:

- 1) Skyward Family Access
 - Here you may view payments, purchases, and current balance. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to monitor each student's account and keep that account paid ahead.
 - Low balance reminders may also be set here by going to the Food Service tab, choosing My Account at the top of the screen, scrolling down and checking the box to receive email notices when balance is under \$5.00. Please ensure your email address in Skyward is correct.
- 2) Utilize SchoolPay.com online payment system and/or smartphone app to monitor balance.

- System can be used to monitor balance and purchase history regardless of using it to pay or not
- Additionally, system may be used to manage low balance notifications and automatic payment settings.

Steps for creating a SchoolPay account:

- Please go to www.schoolpay.com and click on the "Create an Account" box on the right-hand side of your screen.
- Step 1: You will be prompted to enter your contact information.
- Step 2: You will be prompted to enter your student's information.
 - You will first enter the district and school your student attends.
 - Next, you will enter your student's ID number.
 - Lastly, you will enter your student's last name and select add student.
- Step 3: You will then be presented with our terms and conditions.

3) Contact the Cafeteria Manager at the student's school.

Balance Notifications:

Students and parents are currently notified of current balances as described below:

1) Students: Students can clearly see balances or ask cashier at the point of sale. Students are told verbally at the point of sale when his/her balance has dropped below the price of a lunch.

2) Parents:

- Parents can sign up to set custom low balance email reminders for free at www.SchoolPay.com.
- Check the box to receive low balance notification emails in Skyward Family Access under the Food Service tab.
- MVCSC Food Services sends courtesy email notifications to primary guardians whose students have a negative account balance. Payers with a significant negative balance (-\$10.00 or more) are subject to collections after three (3) weeks if not paid off. See section below for more details.

End of Year Balances:

Funds remaining in students' Food Services accounts at the end of each school year (or negative balances) will automatically be applied to the student's balance for the next school year. Only in the event that a student leaves the school district (i.e. moves, graduates, etc.), may a refund or transfer of account balance be requested. Parent/Guardian can request a refund using the online [Refund Request Form](#) (found on Mt. Vernon Food Service web page) within 30 days of the end of the school year or 30 days after the date the student leaves the district.

C. Charges (purchasing without money on account)

MVCSC wants to ensure that every student has access to nutritious, high-quality meals daily. To achieve this goal, it is very important for students, parents and schools to work together to ensure that students have money on account to purchase meals. MVCSC is not allowed, per USDA regulations, to incur debt from unpaid meal charges. Therefore, MVCSC has set the following charge policy:

- Significant negative lunch account balances - any balance owed in excess of **\$10.00** - shall not be permitted.
- If a student has a significant negative account balance, s/he shall be provided a regular reimbursable meal that follows the USDA meal pattern, the cost of which shall continue to accrue to his/her negative account balance.
- A student with a significant negative account balance shall not be permitted to charge any a la carte food or beverage items or extras.
- Any significant negative balance will be pursued for collection.

To prevent any negative account balances, the Food Service Department will send out several communications. Multiple notice letters will be sent out to parents/guardians. If the student's significant negative balance is not brought back up to zero or above three (3) weeks after the final notice is sent out, payers will be sent to collections.

In addition to receiving negative account notices, parents may choose to set up low-balance notifications through Skyward Family Access and SchoolPay. SchoolPay also allows an option to set up automatic payments to ensure your student always has sufficient funds for meals.

To view the full policy, please visit the Mt. Vernon Food Service page at <https://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/Administration/8>.

D. Meal Assistance

Free and Reduced Price school meals are available to families who believe they qualify. Families who wish to apply for meal assistance can do so at any time throughout the school year. Only one application needs to be completed for all students in the household. Families choosing to apply for meal benefits have two different options: Online Application or Paper Application. **For faster processing, an online application is recommended; the process is safe, secure, private, and available anytime, anywhere.**

Online Application (Recommended) – Please follow the steps below to complete an online application.

- 1) Log into your SKYWARD FAMILY ACCESS account
- 2) Click on Food Service
- 3) Choose the down arrow next to the “all students.” If you have more than one child, you only need to select one of your students.
- 4) Click Application
- 5) Fill out all required information on the application
- 6) Click the submit button

Paper Application – If an online application cannot be accessed, a paper application may be obtained in any of the following ways:

- You may pick up an application in the Administration Office or any of the School Offices.
- Contact Doris Johnson (information below) to have a paper application mailed to you.

Completed applications should be dropped off or mailed back to Administration Office:

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation
1806 W. State Road 234
Fortville, IN 46040

Students with free/reduced meal status from the previous school year are granted a temporary 30 day carry-over meal status. **Before the 30 day grace period is expired, a new application must be submitted in order to continue receiving free/reduced meal benefits.** If a new application is not submitted within the first 30 days of school, your status will default to a regular paid lunch. You will be notified by mail of your child's status. Until notification you must provide your child with a lunch or lunch money. **APPLICATIONS MUST BE FILLED OUT EVERY YEAR!**

E. Discrepancies or Questions

Discrepancies in purchases charged to you/your child's account must be brought to the attention of MVCSC Food Services administration within 30 days of the date of the purchase in question in order to receive any type of credit or refund. Parents are encouraged to apply for meal assistance at any point in the school year if needed. MVCSC will attempt to collect all money owed. In the event it cannot be collected, a third-party collection agency may be utilized.

II. Meal Pattern

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation knows that good nutrition and learning are dependent on each other. MVCSC strives to provide healthy and nutritious meals students enjoy, which will keep students fueled and attentive to learning, and meet state and federal regulations.

Breakfast and lunch meals are served daily in all school cafeterias, including on 2-hour delays. Current times are listed on the MVCSC Food Service webpage.

School meals are designed to be age-appropriate and provide adequate amounts of calories, sodium, fat and protein; all within the appropriate serving sizes. Menus reflect the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and adhere to the strict daily and weekly nutrition requirements set by the USDA.

A. Offer vs. Serve

MVCSC utilizes the Offer vs. Serve program, which empowers students to make decisions about what they want to eat, while ensuring that each meal is balanced and nutritious.

Offer vs. Serve at Lunch

Each day, students are offered a choice of 5 meal components: Protein (including meat or a meat alternative), Whole Grain, Vegetable (fresh and hot), Fruit, and Low-fat milk (flavored or plain). Students may choose all 5 components, or they can decline up to 2 full portions of the 5 components offered. However, students must take at least ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable to qualify for meal pricing.

Offer vs. Serve at Breakfast

The daily components offered at breakfast include: Whole Grain (at breakfast Meat/ Meat Alternatives can count toward the grain servings), Fruit (can also serve a Vegetable to count towards the fruit servings), and Low-fat Milk. For breakfast, individual *items* are counted instead of *components*. Students have the option to take only 3 of the 4 items offered at breakfast. However, students must take at least ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable to qualify for meal pricing.

Example: If a student selected at lunch a ½ c of 100% orange juice and ½ c of apple slices, this combination would be considered 1 component – Fruit. However at breakfast, if the student selected both the ½ c of juice and the ½ c of apple slices, even though they are both the same component, they are considered 2 separate items.

B. A la carte

A la carte includes any food sold to students outside of the meal. For example, every meal needs to include at least a ½ c of fruit and/or vegetable; but if a student only gets a sandwich, it would be charged as a separate cost since it is not considered a complete meal. Second helpings and extra portions also will be charged a la carte pricing.

III. Dietary Restrictions

MVCSC participates in a federally funded Child Nutrition Program and all food sold must meet program nutritional requirements. Reasonable meal accommodations must be made when the accommodation requested is due to a medical disability or impairment. A medical statement signed by an authorized health care provider with prescriptive authority may be required if the meal accommodation requests are not able to be met within the regularly planned menu items.

Medical Dietary Accommodation Request Procedure

Under the National School Lunch Program and USDA guidelines, MVCSC is required to provide reasonable meal modifications, at no extra charge, to students who have a food allergy, medical need, disability or impairment which restricts their diet. (Reduced/free/paid meal prices apply). All students participating in the School Lunch and/or Breakfast Program who have a medical disability restricting his/her diet (i.e. food allergies/intolerances, celiac disease, diabetes, etc.) should please fill out the Dietary Restriction Form. The MVCSC dietitian will review completed forms and will contact you to discuss the plan to address your student's modifications. You will also be notified if a medical statement signed by an authorized medical provider is required. Meal accommodation plans will then be reviewed with your child's school food service staff.

Please direct completed Dietary Restriction Form and any questions about nutritional information, ingredients, allergies etc. to the MVCSC dietitian, Nina Murzyn: nina.murzyn@mvcsc.k12.in.us.

Procedural Safeguards

If the household feels accommodations are not being met, they have the right to contact the 504 Coordinator and:

- File a grievance if they believe a violation has occurred regarding the request for a reasonable modification;
- Receive a prompt and equitable resolution of the grievance;
- Request and participate in an impartial hearing to resolve their grievances;
- Be represented by counsel at the hearing;
- Examine the record; and
- Receive notice of the final decision and a procedure for review, i.e., right to appeal the hearing's decision.

Milk Substitution Policy

The USDA has established a milk substitution policy in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Under the Offer vs. Serve program, students have the right to deny milk if they so choose due to religious or lifestyle choices. However, if a student has a medical disability (such as lactose intolerance or a milk allergy), the foodservice program cannot *require* the student to decline the milk and must offer a comparable substitution in such cases. MVCSC will provide students who have a milk allergy/intolerance with soy milk, which is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. If your child needs a milk substitution due to a disability, please complete MVCSC's Dietary Restriction Form. A medical statement signed by a health care provider with prescriptive authority is optional and may be included with the form as additional documentation. Dietary Restriction Forms/ medical statements should be turned into the MVCSC dietitian, Nina Murzyn at nina.murzyn@mvcsc.k12.in.us. If your child has a true milk allergy, a doctor's note should also be turned into the school nurse.

Water Policy

Furthermore, the USDA requires that free drinking water is made available to all students during meal service times. If a child denies the milk for whatever reason, they have access to water, free of charge, in the cafeteria. All students will be able to use the water fountains inside the cafeteria, or a Hydration Station with a water dispenser and cups will be set up inside the cafeteria. Bottled water will also be available for purchase a la carte and in vending machines.

Religious/Lifestyle Dietary Restriction Policy

Any diets centered on religious or lifestyle preferences are not eligible for a special accommodation since they are not based on medical condition, and therefore MVCSC is not required to make accommodations solely based on those reasons. MVCSC recognizes there are students in attendance with various lifestyles and religious beliefs. In order to help students and families make choices that are appropriate for them, each school menu identifies which food items contain pork and offer at least one daily vegetarian option.

IV. Questions

For further information, handouts, forms, and guidance, please visit the MVCSC Food Service Department webpage at: <https://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/Administration/8>

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact:

Doris Johnson- Food Service Director
doris.johnson@mvcsc.k12.in.us
(317) 485-3100 ext. 5109

OR

Nina Murzyn, RDN- Asst Food Service Director
nina.murzyn@mvcsc.k12.in.us
(317) 485-3100 ext. 5114

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, disability, age, 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, audiotape, 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, (AD3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, 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. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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