

Avon Lake City Schools

Food Service Department
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Dear Parent(s):

Avon Lake City Schools has a computerized point of sale cafeteria system in place.. This allows students more time to enjoy their lunch and gives parents the ability to monitor what their child is eating. It also allows parents to check lunch account balances. We have enjoyed great success with this system.

There are several major benefits to our system:

- Parents can monitor what their child is buying and the food choices their child is making.
- Students will have more time to enjoy their lunch since lunch lines won't be bogged down with students searching for money or lunch tickets.
- Students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program cannot be identified which can help boost school lunch participation and federal reimbursements.
- Students with food allergies can immediately be identified by Food Service staff through their personal account.

How does this work?

- Individual student accounts are set up with the student's identification number and photo and finger scan. Students will access their account by placing their finger on the scan in the lunch line.
- Parents can deposit money into their child's lunch account either weekly/monthly or on an annual basis for the purchase of lunch or healthy snack options.
- Payments can be made online at www.myschoolaccount.com with a credit card or a checking/savings account transfer. Please be advised of bank fees associated with making online payments: \$2.00 flat fee for checking/savings account debit, \$2.00 transaction fee for credit cards. Cash and checks will be accepted at the school buildings with no fee, but must be in an envelope with the students name clearly marked. No payments are accepted during the lunch line.
- At the elementary schools, no student will be denied a lunch regardless of their lunch account balance. Starting in grade 5, students are allowed to "charge" a lunch. Once their account balance is -\$10, lunches will be denied until their account is up to date. Students will be notified when their lunch account balance is low. Please keep track of your child's account and the amount of money available at www.myschoolaccount.com. You can also sign up to receive low account balance notification via email.

We look forward to seeing your children in our cafeterias and enjoying a healthy and wonderful lunch. Please utilize the www.myschoolaccount.com website. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me — Shannon FitzGerald, Dietitian/Food Service Supervisor at 440-930-8215, or shannon.fitzgerald@avonlakecityschools.org. You can also find helpful information and lunch menus in the "nutrition/food service" section of the Avon Lake City Schools website (www.avonlakecityschools.org)

Sincerely,

Shannon FitzGerald

Shannon FitzGerald, MS, RD, LD
Food Service Supervisor

Avon Lake City Schools

Food Service Department POS (Point of Sale System)

Questions and Answers

Q: How does our lunch system work?

A: Easily! Upon registering in our school district, lunch accounts are set up for all students. We use biometric finger scanning to positively identify each student in our lunch line.

Q: How do I put money into my child's account?

A: Parents can pay for as many lunches in advance (weekly, monthly, and yearly) as you wish up to an entire school year. These funds will be deposited into an account for your child to use at lunchtime.

There are 3 ways to deposit money into your child's account.

1. You can send (via mail) a check or money order to the school office.
2. You can also have your child drop off a check payment to your school's office. Please make the check payable to Avon Lake City Schools Food Service. Payments will not show on accounts until the following business day so please plan accordingly.
3. You can make credit card payments or pay by check on-line through the Food Service Solution's website (www.myschoolaccount.com). Please be advised of the fees associated with making online payments: \$2.00 flat fee for checking/savings account transfers and credit cards. These fees are assessed by the bank. You will need to create a parent account the first time you visit the site. You will also need your child's 6 digit student ID number to list them under your account. Please call 440-933-5163 and ask for Judi or Shannon to help you obtain your child's 6 digit student ID number. Even if you choose not to make payments through this site, it is still a valuable tool to check on lunch account balances and to see what exactly your child has purchased.

Q: How does my child use his/her account?

A: By each cashier station in the cafeteria there will be a biometric finger scan. The child places their index finger on the scan. This will prompt a picture ID to come up as well as the account balance and any other pertinent notes. The food service cashier will enter on a touch screen computer terminal what has been purchased and the program automatically subtracts and computes the current balance.

Q: Will this speed up the lunch lines?

A: For the first week or two the lunch line may run a little slower until students/staff are accustomed to routine. After the initial weeks of school, the system expedites the lunch line.

Q: Will cash still be accepted?

A: It is discouraged. The final goal is to eliminate the need for students to carry cash for lunch. Cash is not accepted during the lunch line. Students are expected to turn in any lunch payments (cash or check) at the beginning of the school day. These payments will be applied to their lunch account in time for lunch.

Q: What happens when my account runs low?

A: The cashier will hand the student/teacher a preprinted payment note or envelope, indicating that the account is getting low. In addition an automated letter, phone message or email may be sent to the household. You can also sign up on www.myschoolaccount.com to receive low balance notification via email. Please take advantage of this feature.

Q: What happens if the child's account has no balance?

A: A child will not be denied a lunch. The student may be supplied an alternate lunch. Their account will still be charged. Our philosophy is that each student needs optimum nutrition at lunch during the school day. Science-based evidence also supports this philosophy.

Q: How can I be sure my child is only buying lunch with the money I deposit? A:

Unless you let us know otherwise, your child may use the money on his or her account to buy any healthy snack we sell. You can make requests to place a purchasing restriction on your child's account by contacting the Food Service Department at 440-933-5163 and ask for Judi or Shannon. You can also email requests to shannon.fitzgerald@avonlakecityschools.org

Q: How do I know what my child is eating?

A: You will be able to view up to a month's worth of transactions by viewing the transaction history page on (www.myschoolaccount.com). This will allow you to view all of the transactions, including payments that have been made within the last 30 days of your child's account. You will need to create a parent account the first time you visit this site and you will need your child's 6 digit student ID number (can be found on child's report card). You can also request information from the Food Service Department at 440-933-5163. Ask for Judi or Shannon. You can also email requests to shannon.fitzgerald@avonlakecityschools.org

Q: What happens if the student cannot remember their student ID or bring up their account by the finger scan?

A: The cashier can look up the student account by the last name and the picture ID will come up for verification.

Q: My child receives a lunch at a 'reduced' or 'free' rate. How will this work?

A: All information regarding students receiving a free or reduced lunch is downloaded into the system and the account will be set up as the others. All students will access their accounts in the same way, so students qualified for free or reduced lunch cannot be identified by anyone other than the food service cashier. A parent may choose to put money into the student's account for a la carte use. If a parent only wants the money deposited used for reduced lunches, then be sure to call the Food Service Department at 440-933-5163. Ask for Judi or Shannon. You can also email requests to shannon.fitzgerald@avonlakecityschools.org

Q: What if I move and have money in the system?

A: You may request a refund.

Q: What happens at the end of the school year?

A: Funds in the account will be rolled over to the next year and if need be, transfer to another school in the district. If, for some reason, money is owed-students may not receive their report card at the end of the year. All money owed to food service must be paid before graduation. All balances (negative and positive) will roll into the next school year.

I hope you have found these questions helpful. Please direct any other questions or concerns to Shannon FitzGerald, Dietitian/Food Service Supervisor at 440-930-8215 or shannon.fitzgerald@avonlakecityschools.org