



Sparta Area Schools

Food Services: Melissa Alley | 475 W. Spartan Drive, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-1744

www.spartaschools.org

January 30, 2026

Dear Parents, Kindergarten round up is an exciting time for students and families, as you start a new chapter in life, we want to extend a warm welcome! Chartwells K12 and Sparta Area Schools are eager to welcome you and your student into the school cafe with new flavors, events, food and wellness education that will inspire a healthy and fun 2026-27 school year!

Education Benefit Forms:

A new Education Benefit Form must be completed annually to receive school meal assistance. This form is VERY IMPORTANT for the school district. It may help provide health and wellness services, before and after school academic and enrichment programs, resources for classrooms, teachers, and students, and fee waivers for college applications, admission tests, and pay to play fees. **The new form will not be available until July 1, 2026.** You can fill the form out online <https://sparta.familyportal.cloud/> or print a pdf copy off on the food service website under the Free & Reduced Application section. We are currently unsure if the Governor's State School Aid Budget for Free Michigan Meals will extend onto the 2026-27 school year. Once this information is available I will send out communication to all families.

Food Allergies & Disabilities:

If your child has a food allergy or disability, please contact Melissa Alley to receive a medical statement that must be filled out by the child's doctor including what the allergy/disability is and what the substitutions can be. This form needs to be completed anytime your child's allergies or medical conditions change to ensure we are providing the proper/safe meals. Once your doctor has completed the Special Diet Statement, please email it to the Food Service Director Melissa Alley at melissa.alley@spartaschools.org . Once the document is received, the Food Service Director will contact the parent/guardian listed on the form to discuss meal accommodations and menu choices before it is put in place. **Please make sure you send your child to school with meals until an alternate menu is made and the parent/guardian has spoken to the Food Service Director.** If your child is lactose intolerant, please complete the dietary preference request form. This form does not require a doctor's note or signature. This form can be completed by the parent or guardian. Special Diet Statements and Dietary Preference Request Forms can be found online under the resource section at <https://www.spartaschools.org/about/departments/menus/>

Payment and Meal Accounts:

For your convenience, we accept payment online with debit or credit card. To do so you must visit <https://sparta.familyportal.cloud/> In order to set your child/children up with an account you will need their name, birthdate, and student ID number. If you do not know your child's ID number please contact the school secretary or the Food Service Director. After approval you will have instant access to your child/children's account history, balances, and the ability to transfer money to family accounts, and pay for meals through a secure internet connection. There is a service fee for online deposits. You may also send cash or check with your child to school. Please make sure payments are identified for Sparta food service and the child/children's names are on the payment.



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Charging Policy

All Sparta Area Schools students are allowed to charge meals, should they forget their lunch money, up to -\$10.00 or three meals in succession. Once student's negative balance exceeds this amount, the student will be placed on an alternate meal including a fruit and a milk until the negative balance is paid in full. The district will send home emails, letters, and make every effort to contact families. A-la-Carte items will not be allowed to be charged once an account reaches a negative balance. Sparta Area Schools does not allow food shaming in our district. If a child already has a school meal on their tray, we will not take it away or throw it away. The student will be charged for the meal. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please fill out an education benefit form which can be found at <https://sparta.familyportal.cloud/>

School Food Service Prices 2026-27

Will be available after July 1, 2026. Please check the Districts Food Service Webpage.

Fresh Produce and Local Partners

Infusing fresh and local flavors into the school menu is a priority for us. We are proud to support local farmers and companies, bringing students the freshest possible produce. We have fruit and vegetable bars available in all our cafes for students to enjoy with their school meals. Local produce on the menu this year includes; Apples, Cherries, Blueberries, Peaches, Plums, Strawberries, carrots, broccoli, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers and any in-season produce that is available.

Mobile Menus are in Your Hands-Nutrislice

Nutrislice brings the power of school menus, nutrition and allergen information right to the palm of your hands! In addition to nutrition information, Nutrislice tells the café menu story with real photos taken by Chartwells Chefs in schools, full menu descriptions as well as café event information, nutrition education and food stories helping students connect the foods they eat in the café to its origins and health benefits. Download the free Nutrislice App from the App Store(iOS) or Google Play (Android) and search for your menus or find them on the web at; <https://spartaschools.nutrislice.com/menu> For more information please visit the district food service website.

Discovery Kitchen, Mood Boost, Global Eats, Promotions, Fun Days and more

Throughout the year, students will have the opportunity to learn about healthier food options through fun and engaging activities that we have planned in the school cafes through our Discovery Kitchen, Mood Boost, and Global Eats nutrition education programs brought to the café by Chartwells Chefs and Dietitians. Food Service will have food samplings and provide nutrition educations and activities for the students to enjoy. Food Service will feature a variety of themes and events-look for more information on these special events throughout the school year in our Food Service monthly newsletters.

Best Regards,
Melissa Alley
616-887-1744
Melissa.alley@spartaschools.org
Director of Dining Services
Sparta Area Schools
This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.