

Dear Parents of 4 Year Old-2nd Grade Students,

This letter is intended to assure that everyone is aware of important information related to the afternoon milk program.

This program is provided to support the health and wellness of our students during a time of great growth. It has been traditionally provided in this district as well as others for many, many years, and while many of us assume that it is tied to the National School Lunch Program in terms of cost and subsequent reimbursement, it is not. The district has no method of reimbursement for the cost of this program. For this reason, there is no deduction for a student who is receiving free or reduced meal pricing.

Parents or guardians of students desiring milk in the afternoon are responsible for payment at the cost of \$0.45. This has been confusing to many people and has caused some frustration as well. We have no control over this lack of reimbursement and are not in a position to incur the costs associated with it, as much as we would like to do so.

Additionally, as the district's policy states that student lunch accounts can not have a negative balance greater than \$10.00, we regularly have children in a position of not receiving the benefits of this program. The historical practice of the district has been to use funds donated by individuals and community organizations to help defray this cost. Often these funds are received to use generally for the good of students.

Occasionally, this leaves it up to our staff to determine what is good for students of the district, and for whom the funds should be appropriated. We do not believe this is an appropriate or prudent practice for the district. Therefore, the following guidelines related to the K-2nd Afternoon Milk Program as well as the use of donated funds to support this program are listed below.

- The district practice of not allowing students to carry a negative balance greater than \$10.00 will be consistently enforced.
- Should a family struggle to pay for the expense of the Afternoon Milk Program, assistance must be requested through the support funds made available by individuals and community organizations.
- In order to access these funds, parents or guardians will be asked to complete a simple form, a copy of which is on the reverse side of this document.
 - If your child is identified as eligible for free or reduced lunch pricing, your signature is all that is required.
 - If your child is not eligible for free or reduced pricing, but your family is experiencing financial hardship, a brief explanation, and your signature is required.

Should this fund become exhausted, the milk will again be charged to the student's account. If a student's lunch account reaches a point where it is negative more than \$10.00,

they will no longer be allowed to receive the afternoon milk. They will be offered fountain water instead.

At any time, you, as your child's parent or guardian may ask that he/she not receive milk in the afternoon. We again will offer water in lieu of milk.

We hope we have brought clarity to this matter and appreciate your understanding of the situation. Please contact either of the elementary offices should you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Hissem
Superintendent
Van Buren County Community School District

Please sign and return if your child receives free/reduced meals, and you would like access to the afternoon milk funds when available.

If your child is not eligible for free or reduced lunch pricing, but your family is experiencing financial hardship, a brief explanation and your signature is required.

Child/Children's names

Grade(s)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date