

Highlands Hot Lunch

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General FAQ:

Q: When and What is Hot Lunch?

A: Hot Lunch is a PAC fundraiser organized to provide a “hot lunch” to the kiddos at school. This is an OPTIONAL event but gives you two less lunches to make!

Hot lunch runs most Mondays and Fridays.

Q: Who runs the Hot Lunch program at Highlands and how can I contact them?

A: Hot lunch is run entirely by Highlands parent volunteers! Typically, there is a **Munchalunch** Coordinator, a Volunteer Coordinator, several Leaders and a large pool of general volunteers.

The current Hot Lunch Coordinators and their contact information will be communicated through the Newsletter in September.

Q: When can I order Hot Lunches?

A: There will be two sessions for ordering through Munchalunch, our online ordering system.

- The first Fall session opens mid-September for lunch days from October to January.
- The second session opens mid-January for orders February through June.

Check the newsletters received from [HIGHLANDS PAC] for ordering communications and deadlines.

Munchalunch Ordering FAQ:

Q: How do I create a Munchalunch Account?

A: All parents must first register an account online at <https://munchalunch.com> and click “Register Account”. You can find our school by selecting “North Vancouver” for the City and then scroll to find “Highlands Elementary School”. After confirming the school, you will be prompted to enter the parent names, email and create a password.

Q: How do I order for more than one child?

A: You must order for each child individually.

- Create the order for your first child, then select “choose another child” and create the order for your next child.
- Orders are separate for each child but the ‘payment due’ is presented as a lump-sum after submitting the order.

Q: What payments are accepted in Munchalunch?

A: Munchalunch uses an external vendor "[Stripe](#)", that is able to provide secure one-time payment by credit card at the time of ordering. If you are not able to pay by credit card, please contact the Munchalunch coordinator at Highlands prior to ordering.

Q: When do I have to pay?

A: Payment is due immediately. Once an order is placed, you have one hour to complete payment, otherwise the entire order is automatically cancelled.

Q: How do I get a copy of my order?

A: Munchalunch will send an automated confirmation email which includes a copy of the order. Parents can also login to their account anytime to review and print their orders.

Q: How do I keep track of what I ordered for my kids?

A: Munchalunch.com will send an automated email ***** LUNCH REMINDER ***** the day before each Hot Lunch date to the parent email used for registration, which lists the exact food items and quantities ordered. Make sure that you have selected “Allow **Lunch Reminders**” in your profile.

Q: What if I make a mistake ordering?

A: If the ordering session is currently open, you may go in and Edit your order. If the ordering deadline has passed, please contact the Munchalunch Coordinator for assistance.

Q: Why are there Admin Credits in my account?

A: If there are any adjustments made by the Munchalunch Coordinator after the orders have been placed and paid for, then these will appear as Admin Credits in your Munchalunch account. Example adjustments could be cancelled orders from field trips, corrections to errors made during ordering, or refunds given by vendors. If you would like more information about credits in your account, please contact the Munchalunch coordinator for details.

All adjustments owed to you will be applied to your next order automatically. If the balance is owing, it will need to be paid before you will be allowed to order again.

If you are leaving the school before the next session and have a balance owing to you, we ask you to consider leaving the balance as a fundraiser donation to the HPAC. However, if it is a significant balance, a refund will be provided by request.

Food Distribution/Delivery FAQ:

Q: How can I be assured that my child will receive the correct order?

A: Munchalunch generates reliable reports and labels that are used to confirm orders with the vendors and to distribute food in each classroom. Each food item is labelled with the school, division, student name and item ordered. If the item has been correctly ordered and paid for in Munchalunch, it is rare that the order will be missed and more likely that the volunteers at the school made a sorting mistake. With orders of over 500 food items distributed between the 19 divisions in a short time frame, errors placing the food into the correct bins sometimes happen. These are often resolved quickly as described below.

Q: What happens if my child does not receive their food or receives the wrong items?

A: If your child does not receive their hot lunch as expected, they should immediately inform one of the Grade 6/7 lunch monitors, who will accompany your child to the Kitchen area for assistance. The Hot Lunch Leader will review a printout of the Classroom Distribution Report (generated by Munchalunch) to determine the child's order and do their best to resolve the situation. Often the missing item is discovered in another class's bin, but if not found quickly, the volunteers will offer a similar item from extra food (undelivered food from absent students or extras provided by the vendors).

If the student does not want the similar item, or their name was not on the Distribution Report, the next step would be for the student to go to the office to call home to see if lunch could be brought quickly, or the office may have snacks or sandwiches to offer.

If the order was on the Distribution Report but not resolved with extra food, the Hot Lunch Leader will record the name and division of the student and the specifics of the issue and provide this to the

Munchalunch Coordinator who will be in contact with the parent to explain the situation and offer a refund for the missing items.

Please keep in mind that Hot Lunch is a fundraiser run entirely by volunteers and while we do our best for the students, mistakes can happen. We recommend that you review the reminder emails with your children on hot lunch days so they are aware of what they ordered. We often have students coming to the kitchen confident that they received the wrong item only to discover that their parents had ordered something different from what they were expecting.

Q: What if my child does not like what they have ordered?

A: Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate changes on the day of hot lunch. We strongly advise parents to have their children involved in ordering so they can select items that they know they would like to eat. Please contact the Munchalunch Coordinator if there is a food quality issue.

Q. What happens if my child is sick or away?

A: We kindly ask that you consider the missed food to be a donation. The volunteers have a short window to organize hundreds of students' lunches and sort them into the divisions and we are often too busy to pull lunches for individual requests. If you know ahead of time that you will be away, there is an opportunity to check off the dates you would like to skip in Munchalunch at the time of ordering. We must submit orders to our vendors in advance, so we are unable to cancel orders last minute. We drop off all extra food to a local shelter so no food is wasted. If your child will be away for an extended time please contact the Munchalunch Coordinator.

Q. My child's class has a field trip coming up, how do I cancel their order?

A: We ask that the Class Reps contact the Munchalunch Coordinator as soon as the dates are known to determine whether the hot lunches can be picked up by a parent volunteer and delivered to the students, or if cancellations are required. We require at least two weeks prior notification as the final orders are sent to the vendors in advance and cannot be changed at that point. If the order is able to be cancelled, the Class Rep can compile a list of students attending the field trip and provide this to the Munchalunch Coordinator who will make the necessary adjustments to the orders and provide a credit on the accounts.

Q: What happens to leftovers and the hot lunch containers?

A: Students bring home all hot lunch leftovers, garbage and recycling. We ask that you provide a XL Ziplock or empty lunch kit to avoid spills or messes in backpacks – especially with soy sauce on sushi day! There are sinks in the classroom for kids to rinse empty containers, if necessary. Most hot lunch items come in containers with lids, and we have elastics available to help keep the lids closed.

NEW: Booster Juice days - our volunteers will be collecting all of the drink containers and taking them home for recycling.

Q: What if my child forgets a fork?

A: We understand it happens from time to time. There is a limited number of forks and other supplies (spoons, napkins, soy sauce, ketchup) available in the Kitchen area that have been donated by parents. Your child can ask their lunch monitors for assistance or come to the kitchen themselves to ask the parent volunteers for the items.

Food FAQ:

Q: How are the vendors selected?

A: Highlands has worked with several vendors for many years now and we like to maintain relationships with the ones that offer healthy choices, use safe food handling practices, have a track record of delivering the food on time and consistently provide quality food selections. The hot lunch team is often contacted by new vendors or seek a new one to add some variety to the menus each year. In addition, we discuss and share favourite vendors and food items with hot lunch teams at the other schools in the district. We are always open to suggestions of vendors that would meet the food guidelines and appeal to the students.

Q: How are the menus and individual food items selected?

A: All school hot lunch programs are required to adhere to The Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools ("the Guidelines"), which define the nutrition standard that schools are required to apply to all food and beverages sold to students. You can review these guidelines in detail on the healthlink bc.ca website: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating-physical-activity/policies-and-guidelines/guidelines-food-and-beverage-sales-bc>

Or a quick overview is summarized in the following document:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/healthyschools/2015_guidelines_at_a_glance.pdf

In general, the hot lunch coordinators will score food into the following 3 categories and only select menu items that fall into the first two categories.

1. **Sell Most** (At least 50% of choices) - These food and beverages are healthier options. They tend to be higher in essential nutrients and lower in sodium, sugar and fat.
2. **Sell Sometimes** (Up to 50% of choices) - These food and beverages provide essential nutrients but have higher amounts of sodium, sugar and/or fat than Sell Most foods.
3. **Do Not Sell** (Should not be sold to students) - Food and beverages in this category contain higher amounts of sodium, sugar and/ or fat and may be less nutritious foods. These foods and beverages should not be sold to students.

Acknowledging and respecting the diversity of students at the school, the hot lunch team also tries to create menus with options for allergies and dietary restrictions, student preferences and varying price points.

Q: How do we know the food is being safely handled?

A: We only choose vendors that have their permits from [regional health authorities](#). In addition, the Hot Lunch Coordinators have obtained their FOODSAFE Level 1 Certificate and oversee all Hot Lunches to monitor for any food safety concerns.

At Highlands Elementary, we have taken careful precautions to ensure the hot lunch program is safe and accommodating for students with food allergies. We work closely with our vendors to address the specific dietary needs of our school community and minimize risks as best possible.

Volunteering FAQ:

Q: I would like to help with Hot Lunch. How do I sign up?

A: We would love to have you on our team! Every September we will do a call out for new volunteers in the school's newsletter with a link to sign up through FreshSchools. We will then send out further instructions to all who signed up and organize training.

We do welcome volunteers at any point in the year. If you missed the initial sign up, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator and they will add you to the FreshSchools committee.

Q: What are the volunteering roles available?

A: Every hot lunch day we require the following volunteers:

- Sorting volunteers – They arrive ahead of lunchtime to assist with sorting meals, handling any issues that may arise, and managing cleanup.
- Leader – An experienced volunteer to lead the team on each hot lunch day.
- Munchalunch and Volunteer Coordinators – These roles are determined in advance as there are specific training requirements and time commitments that must be met. If you are interested in a larger volunteer role at the school, please reach out to the Hot Lunch Coordinators.

Q: What volunteer paperwork do I need to complete?

A: All volunteer positions at the school require the Volunteer Application Form and Confidentiality Declaration to be completed and handed into the office. These are available to be picked up at the office anytime. In addition, the hot lunch coordinators and leaders need to have completed and submitted their Criminal Record Check (CRC) to the SD44 School District.