

MEAL POLICY

I. PURPOSE/POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of this policy are:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.
- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, students and parent/guardians to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish policies that are age appropriate.
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Food Service Department: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district of outstanding balances. The food service department is also responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian of low or outstanding balances.

The School District: Responsible for supporting the food service department in collection activities.

The Parent/Guardian: Immediate payment.

III. ADMINISTRATION:

Free and Reduced Lunch Students

Free lunch status students will not be allowed to have a negative account balance. Free lunch status allows a child to receive a free meal every day. Additional items are not part of the USDA program.

Reduced lunch status students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of three (3) reduced price meals which will be known as the "account cap". Reduced lunch status allows a child to receive reduced priced meals at a reduced amount determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Nutrition, Health & Safety Programs.

All Other Students:

Students will be allowed to charge up to a maximum dollar equivalent of three (3) meals which will be known as the "account cap".

These meals will include anything on the menu.

Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians once a balance meets the "account cap" during the school year.

Mrs. Norma Joy, Chairperson
Mrs. Bonnie Cyr
Mr. Relf Fogg
Mr. Robert Ouellette
Mr. Stephen Brown

Adopted by the Board: 8 Aug. 2012
Revised by the Board: 6 August 2013
Revised by the Board: 1 April 2015

Once the child reaches the maximum meal charge, no additional items will be sold to the child.

Balances Owed: Collection of balances owed will follow the school committees' policies: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges (JQ) and Food Service Collection (EFAB). This will apply to any account balances above the "account cap" at any time and any payments made by check that are returned to the district by the bank with notice of "insufficient funds". Balances may be checked or paid at any time by logging into the www.mymealtime.com system or e-mailing the food service director. All accounts must be settled at the end of a school year. Letters will be sent home approximately four to five days before the last day of school to elementary students whose accounts are low.

Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF): When a check is returned to the treasurer's office for "NSF", a letter will be sent to inform the parent(s) from the food service director. Payment for the NSF check must be in the form of cash, cashier's check, or money order. Payment must be received within ten (10) days of the date of the letter. Any penalty fee will be made payable to the Wakefield School District and sent to the food service office. The penalty fee and the amount of the check will be deducted from the child/children's lunch account immediately upon notice from the bank and the above mentioned rules will take effect.

Balances Owed with No Response by Parent/Guardian: If the payment is not received, the superintendent or his/her designee may take one or more of the following actions, unless or until prohibited by state law or regulation:

Delay the issuance of report cards, transfer cards, and class assignments until obligations are met.

Prohibit participation of the student in co-curricular programs.

Prohibit participation of student or other students in the student's household from participating in any future fee based program until or unless outstanding balances are resolved.

Prohibit student participation in activities or graduation exercises.

Referral to small claims court and/or district attorney's office.

Parents/Guardians will be sent a written request for "payment in full". (The deposit requests will be mailed home.)

All students must pay all charges before the end of the school year.

All eighth grade students will receive a notice in May of remaining money in their lunch account.

They will receive a letter to elect to move money into a sibling lunch account or to elect to receive a refund. All refund requests will be sent to the food service office and then forwarded to the business office for payment.

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All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain a record of all monies deposited and spent for each student and said record will be made available to the parent upon request. The food service program or the school district's food service management company shall inform parents that meals can be paid for in advance and the balances maintained in their child's account to minimize the possibility that the child may be without meal money on any given day. If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the business office will investigate the situation more closely, including contacting the parent/guardian to bring money to the school and/or encouraging the parent to apply for free or reduced price meals.

Blocks on Accounts: A parent may call the food service director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of additional items or set dollar cap. The school business manager may instruct the food service director to place a block on a student's account due to non-payment of district fees or other collection issues.

Refunds: Withdrawn Students: For any student who is withdrawn, a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An e-mail request is also acceptable.

Graduating Students: Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given a refund. Funds can also be transferred to a sibling's account with a written request.

Unclaimed Funds: All refunds must be requested within one year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Wakefield School District Food Service Program.

NOTE: All funds collected by the food service management company are the property of the Wakefield School District under the authority of the school committee. All funds are deposited into a bank account controlled by the SAU #64 business administrator. It is from this fund that the food service management company is paid for the goods and services required to operate the program.

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