

CAFETERIA MEAL CHARGES

The Board recognizes that on occasion, students may not have meal money, either in hand or on their pre-paid accounts. The intent of this policy is to insure compliance with State and Federal reporting requirements and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

GOALS

The goals of the Fairfield Local School District's Food Service Department are:

- ❖ to ensure that all students have a healthy meal and that no child goes hungry
- ❖ to treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line regarding meal account status
- ❖ to support positive and clear communication among staff, administrators, teachers, students and parents/guardians
- ❖ to encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student
- ❖ to establish a consistent practice regarding charges and collection of charges

GUIDELINES

To comply with State guidelines and maintain a system for accounting for charged meals, the Board shall abide by the following guidelines:

- ❖ Students in K-12 are limited to a negative balance of -\$10.00 on their account at any given time.
 - When this balance is reached, students cannot charge additional purchases to their account.
 - Students will receive an Optional Meal (Jamwich, cheese stick, crackers and white milk)
- ❖ Only reimbursable meals can be charged to an account with funds at or below \$0.00.
 - No a la carte items or extra items are permitted to be charged to any account.
- ❖ When a student's account reaches \$3.00:
 - the cashier will tell the student that their balance is getting low and they need meal money.
 - an automated phone message will be sent to the student's parent/guardian informing them of the **low balance** and if the account goes to -\$10.00, the student will receive an **Optional Meal** until the balance is paid.
- ❖ 1st Charge (negative balance)
 - the cashier will tell the student they need meal money.
 - an automated phone message will be sent to the student's parent/guardian informing them of the **negative balance** and if the account goes to -\$10.00, the student will receive an **Optional Meal** until the balance is paid.

- ❖ 2nd Charge
 - Head Cook calls home to parent/guardian informing them of the negative balance.
- ❖ 3rd Charge
 - Head Cook calls home to parent/guardian informing them again of negative balance and that beginning the next day the student will receive the Optional Meal (Jamwich, cheese stick, crackers, milk). This meal will be charged to the student's account.
 - The Optional Meal is charged to the student's account and paid from the Community Account.
 - The Optional Meal will cost \$2.00 for paid-status students, \$.40 for reduced-price status students and no cost for free-status students.
 - Because student's accounts cannot be charged beyond the -\$10.00, the Community Account is used to pay for this meal.
 - The Cafeteria Manager will review the Optional Meal charges weekly and reverse the transaction, putting the money back into the Community Account and adjusting the student's account to reflect the purchase.
 - The Community Account is not to be used for staff.
 - These meals will be counted and submitted with other meals for State/Federal reimbursement.

NOTES

- ❖ Automated messages will continue to be sent to the parent/guardian informing them of the **negative balance** until the balance is brought back into good standing. Additionally, letters home and personal phone calls may be used as additional means of communication.
- ❖ Parents/Guardians are continually encouraged to submit a "Free/Reduced Meal Application".
 - If the student qualifies for
 - FREE meals – charges will be reviewed and, if warranted, will be forgiven.
 - REDUCED meals – charges will be reviewed and, if warranted, adjusted. The parent/guardian will be responsible for the adjusted balance.
- ❖ Direct Certification matching will be conducted at a minimum of 3 times per school year.
 - If a student is a match, any charges on their account will be forgiven.
- ❖ No charging will be permitted on and after May 1st each school year.
 - A message will be sent to all students with a negative balance.
 - Students with a negative balance will not receive their final report card.
 - Seniors will not receive diploma until all outstanding balances are paid (meals and other fees).
- ❖ To assist in keeping students' accounts in good standing, the Board encourages parents/guardians to pay for meals in advance by using the internet-based *My School Bucks* (www.myschoolbucks.com) or by sending cash or a check into the school.
 - Cash or checks should be sent to the school in an envelope with the student's name
 - Make checks payable to Fairfield Local Schools

- ❖ All balances (positive and negative) remaining on student accounts will be carried over to the following school year.
- ❖ Positive balances remaining on accounts of withdrawn students or graduating seniors:
 - Money will be transferred to siblings (if applicable)
 - Balances under \$5.00 will become property of Fairfield Local Schools Food Service Department.
 - Balances \$5.00 and over will be reviewed.
 - Parents/guardians will be contacted and given an option of a refund or donating the remaining balance to the Community Account.
 - if a current address or phone number is not available for the parent/guardian, after one year, these funds will become the property of Fairfield Local Schools Food Service Department
- ❖ All unclaimed funds after one year will become the property of Fairfield Local Schools Food Services Department.
- ❖ Balances owed after a student graduates or withdraws are classified as delinquent debt and will be pursued for one year. After one year, the balance is reclassified as bad debt and the Treasurer will determine if the debt is uncollectable and must be written off. Records relating to those charges must be maintained in accordance with the record retention requirements (7 CFR 210.9(b)(17)).

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NOTE: THIS IS A REQUIRED REGULATION