

## 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 \$-15.00 on their account at any given time.
  - When this balance is reached, students cannot charge purchases to their account.
  - Students will receive an Optional Meal
- ❖ 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:
  - cashier will tell the student 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 1) the **low balance** and 2) if the account goes to \$-15.00, the student will receive an **Optional Meal** until the balance is paid.
- ❖ When a student's account reaches a 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**.
- ❖ When a student's account reaches \$-15.00:
  - Head Cook calls home to parent/guardian informing them of 1) the negative balance and 2) beginning the next day the student will receive the Optional Meal.
  - The Optional Meal is charged to the student's 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.
- 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 reviewed and adjusted accordingly.
- ❖ At the end of the 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](http://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 or graduated students:
  - 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 (either by mail or by phone) one time by the District and given an option of a refund.
  - If there is no response from the parent/guardian after three months, these funds become property of Fairfield Local Schools Food Service Department
- ❖ Positive balances remaining on accounts of current Fairfield students who are attending CCP classes full time or are attending JVS:
  - Money will be transferred to siblings (if applicable)

- If no siblings, money will remain on student's account.
  - Prior to graduation, if student has outstanding fees due to the school, the balance remaining on the Cafeteria account will be transferred to this debt.
  - If all fees are paid and no outstanding debt is due, the parent/guardian will be contacted and given an option of a refund.
  - If there is no response from the parent/guardian after three months, these funds become property of Fairfield Local Schools Food Service Department
- ❖ Balances owed after a student graduates or withdraws are classified as delinquent debt and will be added to the student's outstanding fees. 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*