

School Nutrition Meal Charge Policy

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.

The intent of this policy is to establish a process and procedure to handle the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt.

1. Meal Accessibility

- A. All Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
- B. Students may not charge á la carte items or extra items. All extra items must be paid for with cash or the students meal account balance.
- C. The denial of a school meal may not be used as a disciplinary action. Students will not be made to work for their meal or to work to settle any unpaid meal charges. In addition, students will not be made to throw away or discard a meal after it has been served, be labeled with a hand stamp, sticker, wristband, or identified in any other way if they have an unpaid meal charge.

2. Communicating the Policy

- A. The written meal charge policy will be communicated to the household by posting on the Waynesboro Public Schools website, included in the student information packet distributed at the beginning of the school year, provided to all transfer students at registration during the school year, and also attached to the Meal Benefits Application.
- B. The written meal charge policy will be communicated to all division staff prior to the first day of school each year.
- C. Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on the meal charge policy, with record of the training (s) maintained in the Central Office School Nutrition Department.
- D. Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

3. Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance in Student Cafeteria Account

- A. The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account has a negative balance.
- B. The SFA will notify households of negative balances as follows:
 - Phone calls and emails will be made to the contact numbers or addresses on file.
 - Letters will be sent via US mail to the address on file.
 - Letters, addressed to parent, will be sent home with student.
- C. Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.

- D. The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
 - E. The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
 - a. SNP school-based staff will collect payment for meals at the POS.
 - b. SNP Central Office will contact households
 - F. Families may set up a payment plan with the cafeteria manager to repay meal charges, send payment to Central Office, or may pay online on the school website, at the MySchoolBucks link www.myschoolbucks.com
4. Delinquent debt is allowable in the School Nutrition Program and may be carried over to one successive school year.
Bad debt is defined as “delinquent debt that is deemed uncollectible at the end of the school year.” Bad debt is unallowable in the SNP and cannot be carried over to the next school year. Funds resulting from bad debt cannot be recovered using SNP funds and must be offset by non-federal sources. The School Board may solicit and receive any donation or other funds for the purpose of eliminating or offsetting any school meal debt at any time and will use any such funds solely for such purpose.
- Parents will be notified directly if students have an outstanding debt.
- a. Phone calls and e-mails will be made to the contact numbers or addresses on file.
 - b. Letters will be sent via US mail to the address on file
5. At the end of the school year, the SNP Supervisor and the Executive Finance Director will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. Bad debt will be restored to the SNP from the general operating fund prior to the end of the same fiscal year.
6. Assistance to Households
Households with questions or needing assistance may contact the school office where their student attends or the School Nutrition Program office at: 301 Pine Avenue, Waynesboro, VA 22980. (540) 946-4600 EXT.118.

Adopted: November 8, 1994

Revised: May 10, 2012, April 9, 2019, September 8, 2020

Legal Refs: 2 CFR Part 200 Section 143 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.