

STUDENTS WITH INSUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR SCHOOL MEALS AND DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS IN THE SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

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. To be fair and equitable and in order to ensure compliance of all who participate in the school meal program, the policy establishes procedures for methods of payment, charge availability and collection methods.

The Madison County Public Schools Nutrition Program establishes the following goals:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding the method of payment for meals, charge availability and collection methods for charges in the district's meal program.
- To treat all students with dignity at all times.
- To waive all costs for students who are eligible and approved for free and reduced meals after completing the Virginia Free and Reduced Price School Meals Household Application or qualifying through the Department of Social Services.
- To support positive interactions with students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and district staff.
- To encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) to assume the responsibility of payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Madison County Public Schools will accept pre-payment of school meals in the form of cash or check at the register or via the school meal online payment center. www.k12paymentcenter.com
Cash or check for a daily meal will also be accepted at the register.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are strongly encouraged to register for a free account on the school meal online payment center, K12PaymentCenter, which gives access to parents/guardians to:

- View student transaction history
- Request e-mail alerts to low balances
- Make payments and pre-payments to a student's account. There is a minimal fee for each transaction. This fee does not benefit the Madison County School District.
- Set up automatic deposits to a student's account

ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY:

The district administration is responsible for ensuring that the Nutrition Services accounts are properly managed and accurately reported. The administration will closely monitor student school meal accounts with the goal of eliminating negative balances and delinquent accounts.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS:

Any student whose school meal account has a zero or negative balance will be allowed to charge a reimbursable meal. Charging a reimbursable meal will result in a negative balance on the student's account until funds are added to the student's account. Under no circumstances will a student with a zero or negative account balance be allowed to purchase a second meal on the same day or a la carte items until the student's account is in good standing.

For Students with Free School Meals Status

- The federal school lunch program allows an eligible student to receive one free school lunch and breakfast, every day.
- Students are required to take a reimbursable meal; he or she is not allowed to just receive a milk or single item. If the student does not take a reimbursable meal, the meal does not qualify for free status and full price must be paid for with cash or pre-paid funds on account. If the student does not have cash or pre-paid funds on account, the meal will be charged at full price to the student's account.
- Second meals and items sold on an a la carte basis are not part of the USDA program and must be paid at time of sale with cash or pre-paid funds on account. A la carte items cannot be charged.

For Students with Paid School Meals Status

- Prices for school meals are set by the School Board within parameters of federal and state regulations.
- Second meals and a la carte items cannot be charged but may be purchased with cash or pre-paid funds on account as long as account is in good standing. If account has a negative balance, second meals and a la carte items cannot be purchased.
- Students with paid school meals status may charge reimbursable meals if their account has a negative balance.

Refunds

- For any student who has withdrawn, a request for a refund of any funds remaining in the student's account must be submitted by phone call or in writing. If submitted by phone call, please call the School Nutrition Office at 540-948-3780. A purchase order will be submitted and check will be mailed after the following School Board meeting.
- For students who are graduating, a refund may be issued with a phone call, written request or funds may be transferred to another account.
- After six (6) months, unclaimed funds will become the property of the Madison County Public Schools, School Nutrition Department.

Remaining Balances

Any positive balance on an enrolled student's account may:

- Remain on account to be used in the following school year
- Be transferred to another account
- Be refunded to the parent(s)/guardian(s) with request by phone or in writing.

Bad Debt

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 School Nutrition Program and cannot be carried over to the next school year. Funds resulting from bad debt cannot be recovered using School Nutrition Funds. At the end of each school year, the Supervisor of School Nutrition and the Finance Director will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. Bad debt will be restored to the School Nutrition Program from general funds prior to the end of the same fiscal year.

Efforts to collect delinquent and/or bad debt may be handled by:

- Send First and Second Letters
- Phone Calls
- Notice of Adverse Action/potential collections
- Turn charges over to collection agency.

MANAGEMENT SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- School Nutrition Assistant* – Responsible for maintaining records of charges and for notifying the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) of negative account balances. The School Nutrition Assistant is responsible for notifying the Supervisor of School Nutrition of negative account balances in a timely manner.
- Supervisor of School Nutrition* – Responsible for supporting and assisting the School Nutrition Assistant in the collection process.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)* – Immediate correspondence and full payment of outstanding or delinquent balance.

On a semimonthly basis, negative balance letters will be generated for all accounts with a charge balance greater than \$.01 and sent home with elementary students. For secondary students, phone calls will be made for charge balances greater than \$10.00 requesting immediate payment.

The Supervisor of School Nutrition will, if applicable, assist the family in applying for free or reduced price school meals.

If a student’s account balance exceeds -\$25.00, the administration may take the following action:

- Prohibit participation by the student in any future fee-based program (field trips, etc.) until or unless the deficit balance is paid in full.

If a student’s account is not in good standing at the end of the school year, the administration may take one or more of the following actions, unless or until prohibited by state law or regulation:

- Prohibit participation by the student in any future fee-based program (field trips, etc.) until or unless the negative delinquent balance is paid in full.
- Refer the account to a collection agency.

If a senior’s account is not in good standing as of Senior Clearance Day, the administration may take the following action:

- Prohibit student from participation in senior activities and/or graduation exercises.

CHECKS RETURNED FOR NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS:

When a check is returned to the District Treasurer’s Office for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF), the Supervisor of School Nutrition will be notified. The amount of the check, as well as any bank service fees, will be deducted from student’s account.

Adopted: September 11, 2017

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