

## MEAL CHARGE POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent procedures for the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District (WCMUUSD) to provide meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

### General Statement of Policy

- A. The WCMUUSD recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program.
- B. It is the policy of the WCMUUSD to offer high quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry.
- C. Payments to student accounts are made by sending a check or cash to the school or by making payments online at <https://myschoolbucks.com>
- D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to households in back to school packets or e-blasts/emails before school starts and is posted on the WCUD School Nutrition Program Website. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the applications as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school office during regular business hours and online at the WCUD School Nutrition Program website front page. If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits any time during the school year.
  - 1) Households who apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced price meal without an approved application or direct certification information on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with the approving official at the school to see if the application has been received.
  - 2) Households who are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits will receive a notification of eligibility letter based on Direct Certification from the school if the school has received information about your child(ren). If your household receives these benefits and you have not received this letter from the school, the school has not received information regarding eligibility of your child(ren), the household must contact the school immediately to provide current information.
  - 3) Free and reduced-price eligible students may receive a breakfast and a lunch each day at no charge.
  - 4) A la carte items, such as a separate carton of milk or a second entrée, are not allowed to be charged.

**Meal Charge Policy**

- A. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals: The following options may be considered:
  - Students in grades Pre-K-12 will be able to charge a full meal.
  - Students in Grades 7-12 with negative balances will not be allowed to charge a la carte items. They can pay using cash for a la carte items if the account is negative.
  - All students in the WCMUUSD will be provided a meal regardless of their meal account status.
  - All negative balances must be paid prior to the end of the school year. Any remaining positive balances will be carried over to the next school year.
- B. Free and reduced-price eligible students will always be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts.
- C. A student eligible for paid meals who has 'cash in hand' at the time of meal service will be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts. The 'cash in hand' will not be applied to past due accounts.
- D. Students with an overdrawn account are not allowed to charge a la carte items.

**Account Status Notifications**

- A. Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in the student accounts to cover weekly meal purchases. Each school will notify each household of account negative balances via monthly emails.
  - The school will send a monthly bill to those families with negative balances. If a parent requests a balance report, one will be provided.
  - Families are encouraged to set up an online account through myschoolbucks.com to monitor accounts
  - Families may contact the district food service director for balance information.
  - If the account is not brought into the positive, then a weekly email or mail reminders will be sent to parents whose children have a negative account balance.

**Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt**

When the student balance is negative \$20.00 the following collection activities will be followed:

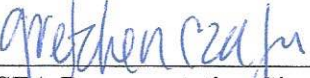
For all schools in the WCMUUSD: The foodservice manager will contact the family via a phone call to request payment. If the payment is not collected in 10 days, a designated person of the district will contact the household to discuss the requirement of the payment or establish payment installments. All funds owed to the food service program must be paid in full on the last of school.

Reviewed by:  Director Finance and Operations

Approved by:   
 Superintendent Signature

Mary Beth Banias  
 Printed Name

3/14/19  
 Date

  
 SFA Representative Signature

Gretchen Czaja  
 Printed Name

3/14/19  
 Date