

REGULATION Board of Education of Queen Anne's County

Responsible Office:	Supporting Services
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REGULATION for Meal Charges/Unpaid Meal Balances 241

I. REGULATION ELEMENTS

In July 2017, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires all school systems operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to develop and implement a policy related to meal charges and alternate meals. An alternate meal is a breakfast or lunch that is provided to a student when they cannot charge or pay for their meal. The procedures to handle unpaid meal balances will be defined to provide consistency for students, staff and parents.

A. Student Meal Charges

1. All students with no money on their account or if the account balance is less than negative \$10.00 are able to charge a reimbursable first meal. The student will be able to select the maximum number of reimbursable components if they desire.
2. No student is permitted to charge more than \$10.00. Once a student's account balance is more than negative \$10.00, they will be given an alternate meal of peanut butter and jelly or cheese sandwich.
3. Meal charges up to \$10.00 are only permitted for a reimbursable first meal or milk. Students may not charge ala carte items or second entrée.
4. Students may purchase a meal with cash in hand regardless of the amount of money owed.
5. If desired, a parent or guardian may request that a dietary note be placed on their student's account to restrict purchases or charges.
6. QACPS staff and other adults may not charge any meal, milk or ala carte items.
7. Families will have two payment options for adding money to a student's account. Online payments through MySchoolBucks.com (associated transaction fee) or students may bring in cash or check to cafeteria staff who can add the money to the student's account (no fee).

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B. Notification of Low Balance Funds

1. Families with a MySchoolBucks account will be notified of a low balance on a student's account via email when the account balance drops below \$10.00.
2. Families without a MySchoolBucks account will be notified of a low balance on a student's account by email if one is on file or letter sent home with student when the account balance drops below \$10.00.

C. Notification of Negative Balance Funds

1. On weekly basis, principals are notified by the cafeteria manager of all students who have a negative account balance.
2. On a weekly basis, the cafeteria manager will print out all Outstanding Charge letters for their respective school and report to the main office.
3. The front office will be responsible for contacting the parent or guardian by phone, email and/or sending the Outstanding Charge letter home to notify them of the outstanding charges.

D. Communication of Procedure

1. Meal Charges/Unpaid Meal Balances policy and regulation will be communicated with families through multiple means, including, but not limited to, QACPS website, QACPS Parent & Student Handbook, hard copies available at Back to School Nights, and included with the Free and Reduced Application packet.
2. Students who transfer into the school system during the school year will have access to the policy and regulation on the county website.
3. Meal Charges/Unpaid Meal Balances policy and regulation will be communicated with district staff and staff responsible for policy enforcement at back to school meetings and orientations for staff. Principals and cafeteria managers will have a hard copy of the policy and regulation emailed to them prior to the start of the new school year.
4. Parents or guardians with questions about their student's account can contact the cafeteria manager at their student's school or the Food Service Coordinator at 410-758-2403 ext. 145.

E. Assistance Paying for Meals

1. Families can find assistance paying for meals by submitting a Free and Reduced Meal Application. The online application can be found on the QACPS website or a

paper application is available at all schools in the district or the Board of Education Office.

2. A school district staff member can provide assistance in completing the application for any family who requests it.
3. Families are reminded that they may submit a Free and Reduced Meal application at any time during the school year.

F. Financial Obligations

1. No transcripts, grades, or student records will be released to another school, university or employer until all financial obligations (meal balances, materials or technical device invoices) have been satisfied.
2. Students will not be permitted to receive their electronic device for the academic year until all financial obligations from previous academic years have been satisfied.
3. If for any reason, there are any remaining unpaid meal balances at the end of the school year, the school that the student was enrolled in when these charges occurred will be responsible for paying the balance off by June 30th.
4. Schools will receive an invoice from Sodexo for the total amount due for all unpaid meal balances of their enrolled students.

G. Leftover Account Funds at the End of the School Year

1. Families have the option to donate a portion of leftover funds on their student's account to the Food Service Department to help pay unpaid meal balances for students who do not have the funds to pay off their negative balances.
2. Families that do not opt to donate will have their full account balance rolled over into the next school year.

H. Inactive Student Meal Accounts:

1. Once a student account becomes inactive, a parent or guardian has thirty (30) days to request a refund.
2. If after thirty (30) days no refund request has been received, the remaining balance of the inactive student account will become a donation to the Food Service Department.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent directs QACPS staff to implement this regulation.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

Date: August 17, 2022



Patricia Saelens, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Queen Anne's County Public Schools

HISTORY:

Initial Adoption	08/17/22	Revised	--/--/----	Reviewed	--/--/----	Next Review	08/17/26
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