

MEAL CHARGING POLICY

In recognition that a child's nutrition is very important to a successful learning experience the Food Service Department will make accommodations for students that have no money in their account or have forgotten their money. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on charging procedures for meals served at the Lynnfield Public Schools. Through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) the Lynnfield School District is able to provide nourishing meals to students. However, unpaid account balances impose financial burden on the food services department and in return on the school district. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations places this liability on the district at the end of each fiscal year and requires the School Food Service Authorities (SFA's) be made whole by the District for any outstanding debit remaining at the end of each school year. To minimize the impact of outstanding debt on the district due to meal charges, the following procedures will be implemented. The goals of this policy are to maintain the financial stability of the program, continuing to provide nutritious meals to students, encourage parents to take responsibility for all outstanding balances, and to treat all students in a consistent and respectful manner.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

All students are expected to pre-pay for their meals by sending in cash or check to the Food Service Department or to their school cafeteria or pay at the time of service. We encourage all parents to pre-pay through the town's online payment system, www.sendmoneytoschool.com. At this site you can also monitor your child's purchases and set parameters on their accounts.

PROCEDURES ON CHARGING MEALS

Students Receiving Free/Reduced Price Meal Benefits

Students who are eligible to receive **free/reduced** meals may receive one complete breakfast and one complete lunch per day. In order to receive the free/reduced meal, students must take all required meal components that make up a nutritional meal in accordance with the NSLP and SBP. Extra meals or a la carte items can only be purchased if the student has funds on his or her account or presents payment at the point of sale.

Reduced price Breakfast costs \$0.30 and lunch costs \$0.40. If the student does not have adequate funds to purchase their meal at the point of purchase, their account will be charged for the cost of that meal. Elementary student's parents or guardians will be notified by email or phone call of low or negative balances. Middle and High School students will be notified at the point of purchase that their account requires additional funds, and their families will also be notified that their student's balance is in the negative via email or phone call. Families with

students who are eligible for reduced price meals that are struggling to make payments are encouraged to contact the Director of Food Services at 781-334-7320

All parents/guardians will receive a low balance alert by e-mail every Monday, Wednesday and Friday when the account reaches \$15.00 or less. If you are not receiving e-mails from us please call our office to update your e-mail address at 781-334-7320

Students that do not have a balance or forget to bring money for that day will be allowed to charge a total of 3 meals (up to \$10.50) and will receive a regular meal of their choice for lunch for that duration. Students will not be allowed to charge dessert, second entrees, snacks or beverages. Principals and parents/guardians will be notified by email of the negative balance.

If a student needs to charge a lunch after the maximum charge amount of (\$10.50) is met, the student will receive an alternate lunch (cheese sandwich or bagel with vegetable, fruit and milk) and be charged the appropriate rate of reduced or full pay depending upon student status.

If funds are not collected, the student will receive the alternate lunch for up to 10 school days. If full payment is not received by the end of 10 days then the student will not be able to receive school meals. The Food Service Department will inform the parent/guardian that they are responsible to provide the student with food while at school.

As of May 1, 2017 no senior shall be able allowed to carry a negative balance.

BALANCES OWED

Collection of balances owed will follow the School Committee's policy, Student Fees, Fines and Charges. This will apply to any account balances above the "account cap" at any time and any payments made by check that are returned to the district by the bank with the notice of "insufficient funds" "NSF". All accounts must be settled at the end of the school year.

Balances Owed With No Response by Parent/Guardian

If the payment is not received, the Superintendent or his/her designee may take one or more of the following actions, unless or until prohibited by state law or regulation.

1. Prohibit participation of student or other students in the student's household from participating in any future fee based program until or unless outstanding balances are resolved.
2. Denial of participation in extra-curricular activities.
3. Prohibit student participation in senior week activities or graduation exercises
4. Withholding of reports cards or transcripts until negative balance is paid
5. Any of the above actions may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools

Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds

When a check is returned to the Treasurer's Office for insufficient funds "NSF" a letter will be sent to inform the parent(s) from the Food Service Director. Payment for the NSF check must be in the form of a cashier's check or money order. Payment must be received within ten (10) days of the date of the letter. Any penalty fee will be made payable to the Lynnfield Food Service and sent to the Food Service Office. Second requests will follow M.G.L. Chapter 93, s40A. Once the town has received a NSF check from the bank, the parent will no longer be allowed to pay by personal check, only a cashier's or money order will be accepted.

ADULT PURCHASES

With exception of staff contractually entitled to daily meals, Staff and Faculty are expected to pay for all meals received from the school food service department. Staff and faculty may also purchase any of our individually proceed items using funds on their accounts or cash at the point of sale. Staff will not be allowed to charge any food items that will cause their account to go into deficit balance.

REFUNDS

Withdrawn Students: For any student who is withdrawn, a written request for a refund or any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An e-mail request is also acceptable.

Graduating Students: For any student who is graduating, a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted in writing or an e-mail.

Funds can also be transferred to a sibling's account with a written, e-mail or verbal request.

Unclaimed Funds: All refunds must be requested within one year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Lynnfield Public Schools Food Service Program