

Business/Non-Instructional Operations Policy #6725 – Food Service Charging Policy

The goal of the food service program is to provide students with nutritious foods that will enhance learning. The school nutrition program is an essential part of the education system and by providing good-tasting, nutritious meals in pleasant surroundings, we are helping to teach students the value of good nutrition.

The Board of Education (Board) has an agreement with the Connecticut State Department of Education to participate in one or more school Child Nutrition Programs and accepts full responsibility for adhering to the federal and state guidelines and regulations pertaining to these school Child Nutrition Programs. The Board also accepts full responsibility for providing free and reduced price meals to elementary and secondary students enrolled in the District's schools. Meals are planned to meet the specified nutrient standards outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture for children based on their age or grade group.

Although not required by law, because of the District's participation in the Child Nutrition Programs, the Board approves the establishment of a system to allow a student to charge a meal when they are unable to pay. Charging is not encouraged by the District but on those occasions that a student does not have money, they will be offered an alternate meal.

The Board realizes that funds from the non-profit school food service account, according to federal regulations, cannot be used to cover the cost of charged meals that have not been paid. Moreover, federal funds are intended to subsidize the meals of children and may not be used to subsidize meals for adults (teachers, staff and visitors). Adults are not allowed to charge meals and shall pay for such meals at the time of service or through pre-paid accounts.

The District offers an automated prepayment system, which allows parents/guardians to view their child's meal account balance and purchases, receive low-balance notifications, as well as make deposits to their child's school meal account. Meals can also be purchased with cash/check.

Any student whose account has insufficient funds (i.e., is at the charging limit) and does not bring a meal from home or does not have cash or a check to pay, may charge any combination of meals up to a negative balance of \$9.00. When the charge limit is reached, a maximum of 3 alternate meals will be provided until the charges are paid in full. This meal will not be charged to the student's meal account. Examples of alternate meals may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An almond butter and jelly sandwich and milk
- A tuna salad sandwich and milk
- A cheese sandwich and milk, or
- Cereal and milk

Parents of students who receive an alternate meal will be contacted by the District to encourage prompt payment of outstanding fees. Negative balance status can be avoided by making a payment in the form of cash, check or by credit card at the following website:

<https://region18.revtrak.net/tek9.asp>

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All charged meals must be repaid. If a pattern of charging continues, attempts will be made to discuss the issue with the parents/ guardians and encourage them to complete a free and reduced meal application.

The policy shall be included in student/parent handbooks, placed on the District's website, and published at the beginning of each school year at the time information is distributed regarding free and reduced price meals.

(cf. 6700 Food Service)

(cf. 6720 Free or Reduced Price Lunches)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes.
10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees.
10-215a Non-Public school and non-profit agency participation in feeding programs.
10-215b Duties of State Board of Education re feeding programs.
State Board of Education Regulations.
Operational Memorandum #19-10, State of Connecticut, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education.
“Unallowable Charges to No-profit School Food Service Accounts and the Serving of Meals to No-paying Full and Reduced Price Students.
National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program;
Competitive Foods. (7 CFR Parts 210 and 220, Federal Register, Vol. 45 No. 20, Tuesday, January 29, 1980, pp 6758-6772.

Policy Adopted: October 2014

Lyme/Old Lyme Board of Education