

## **MEAL CHARGE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district.

The goals of this policy are to:

- Establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.
- Treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- Provide meal charge policy information to Waltham Public School families timely and consistently.

The Food Service Department is responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district leadership of outstanding balances. The Food Service Department is also responsible for notifying the students' parent/guardian of low or outstanding balances.

The school district leadership is responsible for supporting the Food Service Department in collection activities.

The parent/guardian is responsible for immediate payment of student meal charges.

### **Student/Adult Accounts**

- Parents may pay in advance for their childrens' meal by cash, check or online at [myschoolbucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com).
- Students whose school meal account has a zero or negative balance
  - Will be allowed to charge a reimbursable meal. A 'reimbursable meal' is defined as a meal consisting of at least three (3) of the five (5) offered meal components (grain, meat or meat alternative, fruit, vegetable and milk) and must include a fruit and/or vegetable component.
  - Will not be allowed to charge snacks, beverages or a la carte items.
- All debts will be collected at the point of service/sale; e.g. payments received from students during lunch service will be applied to the outstanding debt first and may not be used for a la carte items until the debt is cleared.
- Graduating seniors must pay all debt prior to graduation and receipt of cap and gown.
- Positive account balances carry from school year to school year, or can be transferred to another Waltham student or donated to other student accounts.
- Refund of monies on student accounts will be made to the parent/guardian upon written request to the Food Service Department.
- Adults/staff are not allowed to charge meals, beverages, or snacks at any time.

### **Notification of Negative Balances**

- Food Service Managers will generate negative account balance reminders one time per week. The reminders will be sent home through each schools' principal's office. Parents will be reminded to make a payment to replenish accounts, and will be informed about the free & reduced meal benefit available to eligible families.
- Food Service Director will send negative account balance reminders by email 3 times per week.

- A list of students who owe more than **\$25.00** will be provided to the school principal or liaison each week. The Food Service Director, Food Service Manager, and school building designees will work together to follow-up with households on non-payment concerns and meal benefit eligibility.

#### **Notifying Families of Local Meal Charge Policy**

- All families will be notified of the meal charge policy in the annual Food Service district mailing. This information will also be posted on the district website and available at the Parent Information Center for newly registered students.
- No student, at any time, will be denied a meal.

***Adopted: October 2018***

The Waltham Public Schools participates in the National Breakfast & School Lunch Program sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which permits the school system to offer free and reduced priced meals to students who qualify. Families who wish to apply for free or reduced meals must complete an application each year. The family of any Waltham Public School student may submit an application at any time during the school year. Applications are available in each school's main office, at the food service office and online at [www.walthampublicschools.org](http://www.walthampublicschools.org)