

Unpaid Student Meal Charges

8531.01

It is the goal of the Monticello School District to ensure all children receive proper nourishment in order for them to fully concentrate on learning. The District believes this is a shared responsibility that can only be accomplished through strong partnerships with families and clear communication regarding food service policies. Those families who participate in the School District of Monticello Food Service Program are subject to the following policies and procedures established by the Board of Education:

PAYMENT POLICY

The Food Service Program is a pre-payment program. Families are expected to have a positive balance in their food service account throughout the school year. Account balances and information about purchases made on accounts can be obtained through the district website Skyward Family Access tab or by calling the District Office.

Deposits for the food service account can be made by sending the payment to the school office.

Excess funds or unpaid meal charges at the end of the school year will be carried over into the following school year.

NEGATIVE BALANCES

1. As a courtesy, families will be notified when their food service account reaches a **positive** \$20.00. This notice will be sent through an automated email or phone/text message generated by the Skyward administrative software program once per week.
2. Families with negative balances in their food service account will be notified by an automated email or phone/text message sent through Skyward once per week. This will continue until there is a positive balance in the account. Attempts will be made by the Food Service Director or his/her authorized designee to contact parents/guardians by phone, mail or by other means of communication in an attempt to make arrangements for payment.
3. Students whose family food service accounts show a negative balance up to -\$20.00 will only be served a reimbursable meal and will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items.
4. If the food service account is restored to zero or, students may continue to purchase reimbursable meals up to -\$20.00.
5. *When a family food service negative account balance falls below -\$20.00, all purchases will be denied.* A courtesy meal that consists of a cheese sandwich and milk will be provided for three days at no charge. After the three days, if the account balance has not been paid or a payment plan agreed upon, the family food service

account will be disabled and no further purchases (breakfast, lunch, milk or a la carte) will be allowed. Parents/guardians will need to send a cold lunch with their children until the outstanding balance has been paid.

6. In accordance with United States Department of Agriculture regulations, students who have had their food service account deactivated may continue to purchase meals or milk by presenting cash for the meal or milk purchase in line at the time of service.

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS

Free and reduced price meals are available to those who qualify. An application can be obtained from the school office or online on the Food Service tab on the school website (www.monticello.k12.wi.us). To carry over eligibility from the previous school year, an updated application must be returned to the Food Service Department by September 30th of each school year or the status of the account will revert to Paid Prices. *It is the family's responsibility to submit a timely application. Eligibility is not retroactive. Charges made prior to eligibility are at full price and are the family's responsibility to pay.*

Students shall not be denied access to a federally-funded meal at any meal period if either of the following is true:

1. The student is eligible to receive free meals, even if the student's household owes an unpaid food service debt that was accrued prior to the date of the student's eligibility; or
2. The student has sufficient funds to pay for the meal on the day of service, even if earlier charges remain unpaid.

PAYMENT PLANS

From time to time families may enter into a payment plan agreement with the District. A payment plan is a mutual agreement between the District and the family to bring the Food Service account up to date. The agreement is in writing and signed by the responsible parent/guardian (payor of the account) and a District official. It is the family's responsibility to comply with the agreement and make payments as stated or the food service account will be disabled. Once the account is disabled, no charges of any kind may be made unless the family is eligible for the Free and Reduced Meals program.

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS CHECKS

In the event a food service account has an insufficient funds check returned by the bank, the payment amount plus any fees will be subtracted from the account. Three insufficient funds checks per family in a school year will cause the family to be placed on a "cash only" basis for the rest of the school year.

RESTRICTIONS TO LIMIT STUDENT PURCHASES

Parents may restrict students from making additional purchases by calling the Food Service Department. There are three types of restrictions that can be set up in our computer system:

1. **Complete Block** – No charges to be made on the account.
2. **Complete a la Carte Block** – Only purchase of a reimbursable lunch and additional milk allowed.
3. **Wanding Message** – Once the pin number is entered, a message will appear next to the student's name stating their restrictions. The cashier can bypass this message and continue to charge the account with all purchases.

Please note that although there may be a Complete Block or a Complete ala Carte Block placed on the account, students may sometimes evade the cashier. If a student manages to get through the line with additional items and a cashier is unable to stop the student, the charges will be added manually to the account.

Any of the restrictions described above will show up from one school year to the next unless the Food Service Department is contacted by the parent/guardian with other instructions.

DEFINITIONS

Reimbursable Meals

1. A five component LUNCH is defined as follows:
 - a. Vegetable
 - b. Fruit
 - c. Grain
 - d. Protein
 - e. Milk

Three out of five must be taken to qualify for a reimbursable lunch. One component out of the three must be a $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup** of fruit, vegetable or a combination of both.

2. A five component BREAKFAST is defined as follows:
 - a. Grain
 - b. Additional Grain or Protein
 - c. Fruit
 - d. Vegetable
 - e. Milk

Three out of five components must be taken to qualify as a reimbursable breakfast. One component out of the three must be a $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup** of fruit, vegetable or a combination of both.

Breakfast and lunch meals that don't meet the standards of a reimbursable meal as defined above will be charged a la carte prices.

Second Meals/Double Entrées

1. A second meal that has three of the five food groups may be purchased at a price set higher than the reimbursable lunch price. This will be considered an a la carte item.
2. A double entrée that consists only of the entrée may be purchased at a price set lower than reimbursable lunch price. This is considered an a la carte item.

NOTIFICATIONS

This policy shall be distributed to all District families at the beginning of the school year and to those families transferring into the District during the year. This policy shall also be distributed to those staff members responsible for enforcing the policy.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Legal References: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA 42 USC 1751
(and subsequent amendments)
Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
Sections 115.34 WI State Statutes
118.25
120.10(16)
12.13(6)(10)

Cross References: 8531.00, Free and Reduced Price Meals

Approved: May 10, 2017