

**Purpose:** To communicate the unpaid meal charge procedures with school staff, parents and community members. These procedures are designed to allow children to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day, minimize identification of children with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school food service account.

**Procedure:**

1. Elementary Schools:

- a. Students may charge up to \$10.00 against the meal account.
- b. Charges are only allowed for reimbursable meals or milk purchases, never a la carte items.
- c. Once the \$10.00 maximum charge limit is reached, the student will receive the Alternate Meal. The alternate meal for breakfast is a bear graham and a white milk. The alternate meal for lunch consists of a cheese sandwich and white milk. The student may select a piece of whole fruit to go with the meal.
- d. Students may purchase a breakfast or lunch meal with “cash in hand” regardless of the amount of money owed.
- e. Students currently approved for FREE meals receive a meal regardless of the amount of money owed.
- f. Low balance notices are to be provided to students via their homeroom teacher. The cafeteria manager will place a pink slip in the teacher’s mail box and the teachers will place the pink slip in the binders of the students who have accounts balance drops below \$5.00. In addition, weekly automated phone calls are made to notify households of students whose meal account balance has become low (less than \$5.00 remaining).

2. Secondary Schools:

- a. Students may charge up to \$6.00 against the meal account.
- b. Charges are only allowed for reimbursable meals or milk purchases, never a la carte items.
- c. No Alternate Meal is offered at the secondary school level. Students who have reached the meal account charge limit may be referred to the school office so that a parent may be contacted or the Principal can determine if that student may charge a meal to the School Administrative account should the principal choose to set up an account.
- d. Students may purchase a meal with “cash in hand” regardless of the amount of money owed. Change will be given to the student and not held and applied to the negative balance unless the student indicates that they want the change to be applied to their account.
- e. Students currently approved for FREE meals receive a meal regardless of the money owed.

- f. Secondary school students are verbally informed by the cashiers when their meal account balance is running low. In addition, weekly automated phone calls are made to notify households of students whose meal account balance has become low (less than \$5.00 remaining).
3. Parents may utilize the MySchoolBucks online payment system to replenish students' meal account funds. There is no charge for using MySchoolBucks and low balance notifications via email or automated payments using a checking account or credit card are available. Even if MySchoolBucks is not utilized for online payments, parents may access MySchoolBucks to monitor their child's meal account activity.
4. Parents or guardians with payment concerns regarding their child's (children's) meal account(s) can contact the Food and Nutrition Services Central Office at (301)475-4256 x5. We would be happy to assist you in making arrangements to bring your child's (children's) account current.
5. If desired, a parent/guardian may request that a dietary note be placed on their child's account to restrict purchases or charges. All a la carte items are listed on Food and Nutrition Services Nutrslice website [www.smcps.nutrislice.com](http://www.smcps.nutrislice.com). These items may be purchased at an additional cost which is outside of the regular breakfast or lunch cost. Also, found on the Nutrislice website is "What makes a breakfast" and "What makes a lunch" which indicates what is included in the regular priced published breakfast or lunch.
6. Adult Meal Accounts: The allowable charge on an adult account is \$6.00. At the end of the month, the cafeteria manager will provide the principal with a list of school staff members who have outstanding charges on their meal accounts. If the adult accounts are not paid in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month charges, an invoice will be provided to the school for payment with a list of adults that the amounts include.
7. School Administrative Accounts: Café Enterprise accounts may be established for use by a school's administration (i.e. accounts for meals for substitute teachers or to provide a hot lunch for students who don't have money on their account). The maximum charge on these accounts is \$500.00. The cafeteria manager provides the school administrative office with an invoice for the amount owed that is to be paid in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous months charges.

