

PAYMENT OF SCHOOL MEAL ACCOUNTS

The Board acknowledges the need to have a policy to allow meal charges and a policy to collect deficient account balances.

The Board authorizes and directs the Food Service Director, Building Principals and the Business Office to enforce the policy and the procedure to collect deficient account balances.

The Otto-Eldred School district utilizes a computerized debit system for cafeteria purchases. With this system, each person is issued a Personal Identification Number (PIN). Even though ~~sa~~ student may be identified to receive a free or reduced lunch, all students have the ability to deposit cash into their student accounts and use their PIN to make meal purchases in the cafeteria. As a convenience to parents/guardians and staff, Otto-Eldred School District permits individuals who forgot their lunch money or who have insufficient funds in their account to charge their lunch.

The ability for an individual to charge their lunch is done so as an accommodation by the school district strictly for the benefit of the individual who upon occasion forgets to bring meal money, or does not have immediate funds available. It is reasonably anticipated that students, parents/guardians and staff will not abuse this privilege and will affirmatively monitor the cash balance in their account to assure that sufficient funds are available to cover the cost of all meal purchases, and to deposit the necessary funds whenever it is determined that a meal account balance is deficient.

Cafeteria personnel shall be responsible for monitoring deficient account balances. Deficient balance notification will be generated weekly for accounts that have a negative balance. It is anticipated that this procedure will keep deficient balances to a minimum.

The Food Service Director or designee shall notify the Principal if the charges continue and the negative balance exceeds \$5.00 or more food meals. The Food Service Director will send a letter to the parent informing them of the seriousness of the matter. Online deposit service is available (at no cost to parent) to track lunch balances., receive low balance warnings, and make payments.

Upon a parent/guardian receiving two (2) deficient balance notices from the Food Service Director, Principal or Business Office, and upon the parents'/guardians' failure to pay the balance outstanding within ten (10) calendar days or receiving the second notice, the Food Service Director may be directed by the school district to notify the parents'/guardians' of impending charges being filed.

Upon a parent/guardian receiving three (3) deficient balance notification from the Food Service Director, Principal or Business Office, and upon the parents'/guardians' failure to pay the balance outstanding within ten (10) calendar days or receiving the second notice, the Food Service Director is directed by the school district to file a civil claim with the local District Justice for collection of said account, plus the additional fees assessed by the District Justice's office for collection of said account, will be filed.

In circumstances where faculty or staff have a negative balance in their account the deficient amount will be turned into the business Office for payroll deduction.

A la carte items are not part of the lunch program and cannot be charged. Students with a negative account balance may not purchase a la carte items even with cash. A la carte items are a privilege and may only be purchased if a student's lunch account has sufficient funds to cover the purchase.

In the event the cafeteria receives an "insufficient funds" check returned to the cafeteria from the bank, parents will receive a phone call from the Food Service Director. If, or when plans fail for parents to make full payments for the "insufficient funds" check within ten (10) days, charges will be filed with the District Magistrate in order to collect any money owed for the "insufficient funds" check, as well as any fee assessed by the District by the bank and other costs associated with the filing of these charges.

Blocks on Accounts

A parent may call the Food Service Director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set a dollar cap. The Principal or Business Office may instruct the Food Service Director to place a block on a student's account due to non-payment of district fees or other collection issues.

Withdrawn Students

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

Graduating Students

Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given a refund the last day of school. Funds can also be transferred to a sibling's account with written request.

Unclaimed Funds

All refunds must be requested before June 30th, the final day of the Food Service fiscal year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Otto-Eldred School District School Food Service Program.

End of Year Operations

The student PIN and any account balance will remain with the student from year to year through the time of graduation from high school. All negative balances on June 30th, the final day of the Food Service fiscal year will be turned over to the Business office for final collections.

Payment Options

The Otto-Eldred School District offers a Board approved online payment system with processing fees being charged to the Food Service Department.

Parents may still send cash or checks with their students for payment of lunches. Students may make payments to the cashier preferably in the morning before the start of school, in the cafeteria.