

Central Kitsap School District

Meal Charging Procedure

Unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on our Food Services department. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program while preventing escalating unpaid meal debts. A copy of this policy will be provided to all parents at the beginning of each school year as well as to parents of new students entering the district during the year. A copy of the policy can also be found on our website at www.ckschools.org

Child Nutrition Department:

The goal of Central Kitsap School District is to provide all hungry students with healthy meals each day. In accordance with state law, Child Nutrition Program Cashiers will not deny any child a reimbursable breakfast or lunch, regardless of the balance on their school meal account. They may ask if a student has brought money but will not ask students to tell their parents to send money, require that they work for their meal, stamp their hands or provide other reminders that could single students out in the lunch line. Students wishing to purchase a la carte items such as single entrees, second meals, milk or juice will need to have enough funds in their food service account to cover the cost.

Parent / Guardian Responsibility:

A school meal account is automatically set up for each student as soon as they enroll in the district. Meals need to be pre-paid by adding funds to the account. It is the responsibility of each student's parent or legal guardian to ensure that their student(s) have enough funds in their food service account to cover the cost of their child's meal. Funds may be added by sending a check or cash to the student's school, or payments may be made online at <https://linqconnect.com>. Please note that a service fee is charged when the online payment method is used.

If there is not enough money in the student's account to cover the cost of the meal, credit will be extended to that student in order to receive a reimbursable meal. Students receiving free or reduced meal benefits may only receive one breakfast and one lunch meal each day. A second lunch will be charged to those students at the full cost of that meal, which is currently \$3.50 for elementary students and \$3.75 for secondary students and there must be enough funds on the student's account in order to cover the cost of the second meal or a la carte item.

Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's meal activity in order to avoid accumulating excessive charges that they may be unaware of. Parents may contact the Child Nutrition office at any time if they wish for a block to be put on their student's account to prevent charging of a la carte items or single entrees, but a full reimbursable meal will never be denied to any child.

Meal Payment Collection:

The Child Nutrition office will notify parents of negative food service balances as early as possible and at regular intervals via automated emails that are sent out weekly. Letters will be mailed to families with negative balances without a functional email address. Follow up letters and / or emails will be sent to parents of students who continue to carry a negative balance.

If unpaid balances continue to escalate after multiple requests for payment have been made, the account will be referred to the district's accounting office for further collection attempts or to work out payment arrangements. If outstanding meal charges remain unpaid, the district may hold up the issuance of report cards, school transcripts and / or diplomas until the balance is paid in full.

If a student is without funds in their account on a consistent basis, administration may investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If a financial hardship exists, families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced meal benefits for their child.

Free / Reduced Applications:

Families may apply for free or reduced lunch at any time after July 1st of each school year or anytime during the year if their financial situation changes. Once approved, a student's eligibility for benefits is good for the remainder of the school year. Applications can be completed online at <https://lingconnect.com> or they can be mailed directly to the foodservice office or dropped off at your child's school. If approved, benefits begin immediately but cannot be back dated prior to the date the application was submitted. For this reason, we highly encourage parents to complete an application at or before the first day of school in order to avoid unnecessary meal charges.

Refunds:

Parents of withdrawn or graduating students may request a refund of any money remaining in their account by calling the Child Nutrition Office. *Email* or mailed requests are also accepted. If the student has siblings still in the district, parents may choose to transfer the funds to that student's account. Parents may also request to have balances transferred to a donation account in order to assist other parents pay for their student's meal charges. Requests for refunds must be received within 90 days following withdrawal or graduation or the unclaimed funds will become the property of Central Kitsap School District. If students receiving free or reduced meal benefits leave the district with positive balances on their account, every attempt possible will be made to refund those funds to the parents.

The Central Kitsap School District complies with all applicable federal and state rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability in its programs and activities, or employment related matters, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees are designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination in writing or by telephone: Assistant Superintendent of Human

Resources, District Civil Rights/Title IX Compliance Coordinator, Jeanne Beckon (360) 662-1680; Executive Director of Special Services, Section 504 Coordinator for 28A.540 and 28A.642 RCW, Julie McKean, (360) 662-1066.

The Central Kitsap School District will also take steps to assure that national origin persons who lack English language skills can participate in all educational programs, services and activities. For information regarding interpretation and translation services or transitional bilingual education programs, contact Student Services in writing or by telephone: 1400 NE McWilliams Road, Bremerton, WA 98311, (360) 662-1734