

## Central Kitsap School District

### Meal Charging Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program while preventing escalating unpaid meal debts. A copy of this procedure 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 procedure can also be found on CKSD's website at [www.ckschools.org](http://www.ckschools.org).

#### **Food Service Department:**

The goal of Central Kitsap School District is to provide students with healthy meals each day. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that students not eligible for free or reduced meals be served a meal without payment, the Central Kitsap School District believes that all hungry children should be fed. To ensure that hungry children are fed, Food Services cashiers will not deny any student a lunch that meets USDA requirements for a reimbursable meal, regardless of the balance on their food service account. The cashier will not single-out students who cannot pay by asking them to tell their parents to send money, by requiring that they work for their meal, by stamping their hands, or by any other method. The cashier may ask if the student has brought money.

#### **Parent / Guardian Responsibility:**

A food service 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 they have enough funds in their food service account to cover the cost of their student's meals. Funds may be added by sending a check or cash to the student's school, or payments may be made online at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.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 a lunch, credit will be extended to that student in order to receive a reimbursable meal. Credit will not be extended to cover the cost of: *a la carte* items such as juice or milk, single entrees, second meals, or breakfast. If a student comes to school hungry and without funds to pay for a breakfast, they will be offered fresh fruit and encouraged to come back at lunch time for a full meal. Students receiving free or reduced meal benefits may only receive one breakfast and one lunch meal each day. A second meal will be charged to all students at the full cost of the meal, currently \$3.50, and there must be adequate funds on the student's account 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. Parents may contact the Food Service office at any time if they wish to block their student's account in order to prevent the charging of *a la carte* items or single entrees. A full reimbursable meal will never be denied to any student.

#### **Meal Payment Collection:**

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on our Food Services Department. The food service office will notify parents as early as possible, and at regular intervals, of negative food service balances. The District will communicate with parents and guardians via telephone messaging system, letter, and emails.

If after multiple requests for payment, unpaid food service balances continue to escalate, 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 withhold report cards, official 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 [www.myschoolapps.com](http://www.myschoolapps.com) or they can be mailed directly to the Food Services office or dropped off at their student'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 on 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 balance remaining in their account by contacting the Food Service Office via telephone, email or US mail. If a student has siblings enrolled in the District, a parent or guardian may transfer funds between the students' account at any time. Parents may also request to have any remaining balance transferred to a District-held donation account in order to assist other parents to pay for their 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 and deposited in the donation account. If students receiving free or reduced meal benefits leave the District with positive balances on their account, every attempt will be made to refund those funds to the parents.