

COLLECTION OF PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL MEALS

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district.

Free and Reduced Lunch Students

1. Free lunch status students will not be allowed to have a negative account balance. Free lunch status allows a student to receive a free meal every day. A la carte items are not part of the USDA program.
2. Reduced lunch status students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of six reduced price meals. After that time, reduced lunch status students will be subject to the same remedies, below, as for students that purchase full-price meals. Reduced lunch status allows a student to receive reduced priced meals at \$0.40.

All Other Students

1. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year. Please see "Remedy for Unpaid Charges," below.
2. Once the student reaches the maximum meal charge, no a la carte items will be sold to the student and all transactions may become a cash basis transaction.

All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain a record of all monies deposited and spent for each student; this record will be made available to the parent upon request. The food services department shall inform parents that meals can be paid for in advance and the balances maintained in their child's account to minimize the possibility that the child may be without meal money on any given day. If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the food services department will investigate the situation more closely, including contacting the parent/guardian to bring money to the school and/or encourage the parent to apply for free or reduced priced meals.

Balances Owed

Collection of balances owed will follow school committee policy.

Remedy for Unpaid Charges

The food services director shall inform the business office of all remedies taken. A record of all actions shall be kept by the business office to ensure documentation of the process.

MySchoolBucks

Balances may be checked at any time by logging into the MySchoolBucks system at <https://www.MySchoolBucks.com> or emailing the director of food services. All accounts must be settled at the end of a school year.

When account balances below are reached, the remedies will be followed. All balances are on a per-family basis.

1. When the account balance reaches zero, the food services director or his/her designee will send a reminder email to the parent or guardian letting them know that the account balance is zero and asking that more funds be deposited into the MySchoolBucks account(s). For families without a working email address, the food services director or his/her designee will make a phone call to the parent/guardian. The option of a free or reduced meal application will be offered at this time.
2. When the account balance reaches \$15 in arrears, the food services director or his/her designee or the business office will call the parent/guardian informing them of the overdue balance and ask for more funds to be deposited into the MySchoolBucks account(s). A free or reduced meal application will be offered at this time.
3. When the account balance for a family reaches \$30 in arrears the child(ren)'s principal or his/her designee, will contact the parent/guardian and arrange a meeting to request payment; if more than one principal is involved, then the principal of the youngest child(ren) or the principal's designee will arrange the meeting. The principal or designee will offer the free or reduced meal application at the meeting with the parent/guardian.
4. If the balance remains unpaid after the prior remedies have been used, a certified letter of demand will be sent home to the parent/guardian by the Superintendent or his/her designee. This will warn that the amount now owed may be sent to a collection agency and/or small claims court. Included in the recovery request shall be all costs (including collection expense, postage and fees) associated with the debt. A free or reduced meal application will be included with the letter.

Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF)

When a check is returned to the treasurer's office for NSF, a letter will be sent to inform the parent(s) from the food service director. Payment for the NSF check must be in the form of cash, cashier's check or money order. Payment must be received within ten (10) days of the date of the letter. Any penalty fee will be made payable to the Monomoy Regional School District and sent to the food services department. The penalty fee and the amount of the check will be deducted from the child(ren)'s lunch account immediately upon notice from the bank, and the above mentioned rules will take effect. Second requests will follow M.G.L. Chapter 93, §40A. Overdue balances are subject to the same process as outlined under "MySchoolBucks" above.

Debt Forgiveness

Nothing in this policy should preclude representatives of the district from pursuing and/or implementing compassionate debt forgiveness avenues for legitimate unforeseen circumstances which have contributed to the debt.

Food Services Program End-Of-School Year Closeout

At the first of May the food services program must begin to close the books for the school year. As a result the point of sale system will be blocked from accepting deficit account balances.

1. Parents/Guardians will be sent a written request for payment in full. The deposit requests will be mailed home.
2. All charges not paid before the end of the school year will be carried forward into the next school year.
3. Seniors must pay all charges before receiving their cap and gown.
4. All seniors will receive a notice in May of remaining money in their lunch account. They will receive a letter to elect to move money into a sibling's lunch account or to elect a refund. All refund requests will be sent to the food services office and processed for payment.

Blocks on Accounts

A parent may call the food services director place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set a dollar cap. The school business manager may instruct the food services director to place a block on a student's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items due to non-payment of district fees or other collection issues.

Refunds

1. 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.
2. Graduating Students – students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given a refund. Funds can also be transferred to a sibling's account with a written request.
3. Unclaimed funds – all funds must be requested within one year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Monomoy Regional School District.

Legal Reference: 7 CFR 210, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87

M.G.L. Chapter 71: Section 72. Sale of lunches

M.G.L. Chapter 71: Section 68. Duties of towns to maintain schools; transportation of children; school building committee representation

M.G.L. Chapter 71: Section 37K. Business demonstration projects; disposition of proceeds

M.G.L. Chapter 44: Section 69. Municipal or district services, fees or charges; insufficient funds checks; penalty

M.G.L. Chapter 60: Section 57A. Payment by check not duly paid; penalty

M.G.L. Chapter 93: Section 40A. Dishonored checks; demand for payment