

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## Re: Negative Balances incurred when Charging Meals

Every school year we see a consistent number of students negatively charging meals throughout the district. The Sayville School's policy ensures that no student will ever go hungry, and we make every effort to never put any student in an embarrassing situation. However, we also need to ensure that student charges are paid back in a timely fashion, and that charges incurring negative balances are limited for each student. When negative balances are incurred by the Department of Food & Nutrition, it can severely limit our ability to continue to provide the highest quality ingredients to create nutritious meals for all students.

The Sayville Schools Department of Food and Nutrition follows the Meal Charge Policy for negative balances, discussed within Policy # 8505, "Charging School Meals and Prohibition Against Shaming", which was previously adopted by the Sayville Board of Education. To view this or any other school policy, please go to [www.sayvilleschools.org](http://www.sayvilleschools.org) (Board Policies are found within the 'Board of Education' tab on the home page of the Sayville Schools website under 'Board of Education Policies'.)

**Please note that based on Board Policy, we are given the right to "discreetly notify students of their account balances and why certain items (e.g. á la carte, etc.) could not be provided with charged meals".**

**Additionally, in accordance with Board Policy, students are permitted to charge up to 5 meals where the balance falls below \$0. Once a student exceeds the charge limit, they may only receive the noted meal of the day listed on the Sayville Schools Lunch Menu. The student's account will be charged for the meal accordingly, regardless of the balance at that time. Again, please note that a student will not be permitted to get anything (including snacks and beverages), other than the noted meal of the day, if the student's account has 5 or more charges perpetuating a negative balance.**

Based on this understanding, please be sure to pay off any balance due that your student might have incurred. As a reminder, you may access your student's lunch account at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com), free of charge, to inquire about their current balance and/or purchases. If you have not yet registered on this website, it is easy to do and quite convenient (see the "Pay for Student Meals Online" letter included in this Welcome Packet). Once you register, you only need to add your student by inputting his/her full 8 or 9 digit Student ID #, which you can find on a report card or progress report.

**ADDITIONAL NOTE:** *We find that the negative balances that are incurred are often unnecessary as families that might be eligible for our Free & Reduced Meal Program do not apply or inquire about it, whether it's because they weren't aware of the program, or they are concerned about confidentiality issues, etc. Please be aware that we keep our records for all students/families **strictly confidential**, and either we or your student's school counselor would be happy to assist you in the process of completing this application to determine if you are eligible. An application for our Free & Reduced Meals Program has been included in this Welcome Packet along with a Fact Sheet (i.e. 'Letter to Parents for Free & Reduced Meal Programs') containing tips on completing the application, which is to be used at your convenience.*

Should you have any questions about the MySchoolBucks website, your student's current balance, our Free & Reduced Meals program, or anything else, please feel free to visit the Sayville Schools website under 'Resources/Services...Food and Nutrition' for further information, or contact the Department of Food and Nutrition at 631-244-6555.

Thank you for your cooperation in this effort.