



Book
Administrative Guideline Manual

Section
800 Operations

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Student Meal Accounts and Procedures

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808

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Meals and Ala Carte items are available for purchase in each school cafeteria every school day. Meals and ala carte sales are tracked using an electronic debit Point of Sale system (POS). The amount of the purchases is subtracted from each student's account at the time of sale. To access their meal account, each student is given a Personal Identification Number (PIN). They will use this number each time they make a purchase from the Food Service Program. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to provide adequate funds to cover their child's daily purchases. Students may only be denied a school meal if a parent provides the school with written specific instructions to deny the meal.

FREE AND REDUCED MEAL PROGRAMS

If financial difficulty exists in the household resulting in a negative balance on a Student Account, completion of a Free and Reduced Price School Meal Application should be immediately considered. Programs such as these are made possible through the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. Applications are available throughout the school year at each school's office, the cafeteria or on the District's website at www.gettysburg.k12.pa.us. The application may also be completed online. Please visit the District's website for online completion information. The parent/guardian is responsible to pay the full price for meals until the application is approved. All charges to the student's account are the responsibility of the parent/guardian and must be resolved upon applying and being approved for free or reduced meals. If negative charges accumulated before or during the application process, the parent or guardian is responsible for paying that debt up to the date that the free lunch status is approved. All student and family information is strictly confidential.

A reimbursable breakfast or lunch consists of 3 or more of the 5 meal components offered. Per Federal regulations, no free milk is provided to students who pack lunches.

LOW MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCES

Low balance notices are generally emailed to all parents twice a week if there is a current email address on file. Paper copies are sent to the home for students in grades K-5 if there is no email address on file. A paper reminder is also available at the register for secondary students to take. Students may view their account balance on the POS computer screen daily or ask the cashier for their balance.

Parents and guardians have the option to use the POS Parent Portal on the District's website. Please visit www.gettysburg.k12.pa.us and then click on Food Services and Lunch Time Access and Payment System. Parents and guardians may create an account at no charge using the student's PIN number to monitor their child's meal transactions and meal account balance. They may also set up email notification to receive an email when the student's meal account balance drops below a specified amount as well as adding funds automatically when an account drops below a specified amount. They may also use this portal to add funds to their child's account using a credit card or an ACH payment from a checking or savings account. A small convenience fee is collected by the POS provider to add funds to the account.

Funds can also be sent to school with a child to deposit on their POS account. Checks should be made payable to GASD Food Services with their child's full name on the memo line. One check can be sent in for multiple children if they are in the same building. Any check that is returned back to the District for non-sufficient funds (NSF) from the bank will be assessed a processing

fee by the District. Any NSF checks that are not paid in a timely manner may be reported to the Magisterial District Judge for collection.

END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR BALANCES

Balances will remain in the account at the end of each school year and will be ready for use when the student returns at the beginning of the following school year. If you are moving from the District, a parent/guardian should call the Food Service Office to discuss the account balance and any refund that may be due.

GRADUATING SENIORS

Graduating senior balances will be transferred to a sibling if one exists. Otherwise, if the balance is under \$3.00 the balance will be given to a needy fund account. If the balance is under \$10.00, the amount will be refunded to the student, and if the balance is over \$10.00 a check will be issued to the parent or guardian. Upon request any balance can be donated to provide meals to needy students.

UNCLAIMED BALANCES

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bureau of Unclaimed Property requires the District to turn over all unclaimed balances after a prescribed period of time.

MOVING OUT OF THE DISTRICT/WITHDRAWAL

When moving out of the District or when withdrawing students from Gettysburg Area School District, parents/guardians should contact the Food Service Department by phone or email to review their child's account and to receive a refund for any funds left in the account.

COLLECTION OF UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL CHARGES

Reasonable efforts shall be made by the District to collect unpaid school meal charges from parents/guardians. Efforts taken in the collection shall focus primarily on the parents/guardians responsible for providing funds for meal purchases. The District's General Fund will be used to ensure the Food Service Fund is not penalized due to unpaid student meal accounts. At the end of every school year, unpaid school meal charges will be converted to parental/guardian financial obligations. District administration may solicit the assistance of collection agencies and/or pursue legal actions against parents/guardians who fail to pay off financial obligations within a reasonable timeframe.

A payment plan can be requested by the parent or guardian. The Food Service Department will make a reasonable effort to accommodate their request. Payment must be made at least once every two weeks and the balance paid within a reasonable time or the debt could be turned over to a collection agency at the discretion of the District.

When a student owes money for five (5) or more school food program meals, the District shall make at least two (2) attempts to contact the student's parent/guardian and shall provide the application for free/reduced-price school meal benefits to the parent/guardian to apply for benefits under federal school meal programs. The District may offer assistance to parents/guardians with applying for free/reduced-price school meal benefits.

Communications regarding money owed by a student for school food program meals and/or a la carte purchases shall be made to the student's parent/guardian.

If the student asks what his/her balance is, the cashier may provide this information to the student. Students shall not be permitted to purchase a la carte items if the purchase takes the student's meal account into the negative.

The District shall be permitted to contact the student's parent/guardian by means of a letter addressed to the parent/guardian that is delivered by the student, through (automated and personal) phone calls, email, etc.

School staff members are welcome to establish meal accounts so they can obtain school meals and ala carte without carrying cash. School staff cannot have a negative account balance.

The District shall be prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for a school food program meal or **who has a negative account balance.**

ALL STUDENTS

Unpaid lunch charges will be due in full to the District no later than the close of business the last day of school each year.

If a parent/guardian does not pay the negative balance within 10 days of the charges or in full by the last day of school, whichever comes first, a letter will be mailed by the Food Service Department to the parent/guardian informing them they have 2 weeks from the date of the letter to resolve the debt. The District reserves the right to take legal action if the debt is not resolved. If the balance is not resolved within 30 days of the letter, the debt may be turned over to an appropriate authority for collection.

No student with a negative account balance will be permitted to pay cash for ala carte items until the debt is paid in full.

DONATIONS

The Food Service Department can accept donations to help students in need. The donation will need to be coded and deposited into a Student Need Fund and will be used at the discretion of the Food Service Director with input from other administrators to determine need. Donations received with the intent to help needy students with negative balances will be deposited into a donor account and transferred to the student accounts as appropriate.