

Policy/Procedure administered through Authorized Representative, Supervisor of Food Services

Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policies

This procedure is posted on the CCPS website in its entirety and an abbreviated version is sent to all households as part of the annual cafeteria news and notes outreach materials with directions to go to the website for more information. Households are encouraged to apply for meal benefits in communications produced by Food Services.

Students without cash or money on their account can charge meals. Only meals can be charged, not a la carte. If a student has a meal charge, the student is locked out of buying a la carte items until the charge is paid back. If questioned by the student, cashiers may advise students to have their parents/guardians check their cafeteria account. When a parent/guardian deposits money on an account (cash, check or online credit card payment), the charge is automatically paid back.

CCPS promotes an online service for parents to view their child's account activity and set low balance alerts via e-mail or text to the parent/guardian when funds are low. This helps avoid meal charges. If a student charges a meal, a negative balance notification e-mail is sent to the parent/guardian's e-mail address designated in the student database. This e-mail includes information on applying for meal benefits.

Charge assistance accounts funded by donations, if available, are accessed by central office when a student charges more than \$10. These are true charity accounts, and no repayment is required. If these accounts are exhausted, then charge balances continue to escalate.

Administration will be asked to intervene where students regularly exceed \$10 meal charges and are depleting the limited charity fund. Interventions include Administrator, PPW or Counselor contacting parents/guardians with meal benefit applications or explanation of the necessity to pack meals if not eligible for meal benefits and not providing meal payment. The matter of unpaid meal debt/charges cannot be discussed with the student due to MD state law.

Any negative balance follows the student over the summer and to any CCPS school the student attends.

All efforts will be made to treat this matter with compassion.