

Meal Charge Procedure - Canaan School District/Essex North Supervisory Union

General Statement–

- A. The Canaan School District recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program.
- B. It is the policy of Canaan School District to offer high quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry.
- C. Payments to student accounts are made by sending check or cash payment to the school or by making an on-line payment.
- D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to households on the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the applications as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school office during regular business hours and online at canaanschools.org. If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits any time during the school year.
 - 1) Households who apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced price meal without an approved application or direct certification information on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with the approving official at the school to see if the application has been received.
 - 2) Households who are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits will receive a notification of eligibility letter based on Direct Certification from the school if the school has received information about your child(ren). If your household receives these benefits and you have not received this letter from the school, the school has not received information regarding eligibility of your child(ren), the household must contact the school immediately to provide current information.
 - 3) Free and reduced-price eligible students may receive a breakfast and a lunch each day at no charge.

Meal Charges–

- A. All negative balances must be paid prior to the end of the school year. Any remaining balances will be carried over to the next school year. No report cards or diplomas will be given to students with a negative balance.
- B. A student eligible for paid meals who has 'cash in hand' at the time of meal service will be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts. The 'cash in hand' will not be applied to past due accounts.
- C. A la carte items will not be allowed to be purchased if person has a negative balance on their account. Cash in hand only accepted for such purchases where person has a negative balance.
- D. Adults are not allowed to charge meals if funds are not on their account. Funds must be available on their account or in hand at time of purchase.

Account Status Notifications –

- A. Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in the student accounts to cover weekly meal purchases. The Canaan School District will notify each household of account balances by:
- Families can check their account balances online via Meals Plus.
 - Families may contact the Food Service Director/Manager at 802-266-8910.
- B. The family will be notified by the Food Service Company when the student account balance has reached a zero balance, this notification will be by e-mail or a letter home if no e-mail is on file. Letters will be prepared by Food Service, and will be sent out every Thursday by the Principal.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt –

When the student balance is in the negative based on the meal charge policy by grade level, the following collection activities will be followed for all grade levels:

- a. The Food Service Manager will contact the household to request payment via phone call for any negative balance over \$15.
- b. The Food Service Manager will contact the building principal if no payment is received.
- c. The building Principal will contact the household via telephone for any negative balance over \$30 to discuss the requirement of the family to provide meals for the student.
- d. A certified letter will be sent by the Supervisory Union to the household for any negative balance over \$100 notifying them that the debt will be turned over to a collection agency if not paid by May 1st.
- e. If delinquent debt is not paid in full at the end of the school year, it will be classified as “bad debt” and will be written off as an operating loss. These funds will be restored using the district’s general fund. This only applies if all of the above steps have been completed and documented. Otherwise, the debt will roll over into the next school year.

Donations-

Donations to be paid on Meal Accounts: Any donations made to be applied to ANY meal account balances will be decided at the discretion of the Principal and person donating. The Principal will notify the kitchen on how to apply the payments before a deposit is made into an account. A letter of appreciation will be drafted by the Principal to the person donating, and a letter will also be drafted and sent home via mail to the families impacted by this generosity. A copy of all correspondence will be sent to the Supervisory Union office.

Date Warned: 04/10/2019
Date Adopted: 05/06/2019