

March 1, 2011

Dear Parents:

The Wallingford Schools Food Service Department is a non-profit entity. As a result, we must cover all of our costs through the sale of meals, snacks, and federal reimbursement received through the National School Lunch Program. Therefore, the Food Service Department requires payment at the time of purchase in cash or debit from the student's account.

In an effort to enhance your ability to put money into your child's meal account, the Food Service Department signed up with the MealPay online payment system. This system allows you to use your credit card or bank account to make deposits to your child's meal account by Internet or phone. To further insure that students are able to purchase meals, food service staff sends out low balance reminders. This MealPay system can be used by parents in place of the more traditional method of sending in cash or check directly to the school cafeteria, although this is still an option.

Federal guidelines for the National School Lunch Program do not require school districts to provide full price paying students with a meal. In an effort to assist students with insufficient funds in their meal accounts, the school district has developed the following uniform procedure that will start on March 17, 2011.

Lunch Charge Procedure
Approved February 28, 2011

Elementary and Middle school students who do not have money in their account may charge up to two (2) lunches. The cashier will debit the "Principal's account" for the charges. At the end of each day, the cashier will print out the list of students who have used the Principal's account. The cashier will collect the money from the student to repay the debt. At the end of the week, the cafeteria manager will notify the Principal of the balances still owed by each student. The Principal will send a letter home with the student notifying the parent that their child owes money.

Parents will have five days to satisfy the debt or they will need to provide their child with a lunch from home. If no attempt has been made to satisfy the account or provide their child with lunch, the building principal will call the parent. If a student is without money or a lunch from home on a consistent basis, the principal will investigate the situation. If the charge is not settled by the end of each school year, report cards will be held until the balance is paid in full.

Students with any charge balance will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items, including milk.

High School students are not allowed to charge lunches.

Parents are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price meals if they qualify.

We have managed to keep the meal prices in Wallingford lower than other comparable school districts for many years. Please help us by keeping your child's account current. Food services staff are very uncomfortable having to deny students lunch caused by insufficient balances. We appreciate your prompt repayment of any debt incurred from your child having to charge a meal.

In the event that your family's financial circumstances have changed since the start of school, please contact the Food Services Department to find out if your family qualifies for free or reduced lunch opportunities.

If you should have any questions about your child's school lunch account, the process of depositing funds or the charge procedure, please feel free to contact your school cafeteria manager, they will be more than happy to assist you.

Sincerely,
Sharlene Wong, SNS
Director of Food Service