

# SCHOOL MEAL CHARGES AND COLLECTION OF UNPAID MEAL CHARGES PROCEDURE

## PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### School Meal Charges

Each student in the Pennsbury School District may have a point-of-sale cafeteria account. Participation is voluntary. Parents/guardians may deposit money in advance on a student's account using the web site, [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com). Even if a parent/guardian does not want to place money on their child's account online, they may still use the online account to track balances and receive low balance notifications. In lieu of online payments, cash or check payments can be provided to the school cafeteria cashier. Please visit the website at [www.pennsburysd.org](http://www.pennsburysd.org) and click on the Food Services tab for more information.

Children from families whose income falls below a specified level may be eligible for a free or reduced-rate breakfast and lunch. Visit [www.paschoolmeals.com](http://www.paschoolmeals.com) to complete an application for free or reduced-rate meals.

Any student whose account has a negative balance and who does not bring a lunch from home will be provided a National School Lunch Program meal. Students with a zero or negative account balance will not be allowed to purchase a la carte foods. The parent/guardian of the student will be responsible to pay any outstanding meal obligation.

### Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges

When a student's account goes into a negative status, his/her parent/guardian will receive notification. The District is required to provide a meal to any child regardless of the balance in his/her account if a child requests one. Charges for meals will continue to be applied against the child's account and the parent/guardian will be responsible for payment. If a parent/guardian does not want the District to provide his/her child with a meal when funds are not available, the parent/guardian must provide the District with a written directive to withhold meals from the child.

Monies deposited to a negative balance account will first be used to purchase a current day meal. Any remaining funds will be used to satisfy the negative balance.

A la carte foods are not part of the National School Lunch Program and cannot be charged if a student has a zero or negative balance on their school cafe account.

Reasonable efforts shall be made by the District to collect unpaid meal charges from parents/guardians. Collection efforts shall not have a negative impact on the student involved, but will focus on the parents/guardians responsible for providing funds for meal purchases.

Each month the cafeteria manager will send out a letter or email to the parents/guardians of all students whose accounts have negative balances.

The Food Service Management contractor will provide the Business Administrator a list of negative account balances on a monthly basis. If an account continues to remain in a negative status, the Business Administrator will contact the school building administration and Pupil Services office for further assistance.

Account holders with a negative balance greater than the equivalent of five meals will be sent a minimum of two letters from the District Business Administrator. A copy of the District's School Meal Charges and Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges Procedure will be included with those letters. The letters will also remind parents/guardians that children from families whose income falls below a specified level may be eligible for a free or reduced-rate breakfast and lunch and can apply at [www.paschoolmeals.com](http://www.paschoolmeals.com).

Negative balances will be carried over at the end of the school year. Collection efforts will also continue into the new school year. If above collection attempts by the District have been unsuccessful, parents/guardians of students with a negative balance greater than fifty dollars (\$50.00) will be sent a certified letter from the Superintendent indicating that if payment is not made with fourteen (14) days, the account may be turned over to a collection agency. All fees associated with collection activity, including but not limited to legal fees, collection agency fees, expenses, and any associated court costs in addition to the negative account balance will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### **Donations for Student Accounts**

The District may accept donations to help pay outstanding meal charges. When a donation is received, the District will apply the amount as requested by the donor. If the donation is not for a specific student, the Central Office Administration will seek guidance from either the school building administration or the Student Services Office.

**Effective 12/01/2017**