

## **Unpaid Meals**

### **Lunch Charging Procedures**

Meal accounts for students should be consistently funded throughout the school year to avoid students needing to charge for a meal. However, the Board recognizes that an occasional emergency may make it necessary to charge for a meal. Families needing assistance to apply for free or reduced lunch should contact the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporations Director of Food Service.

The Board's policy and Superintendent's procedure related to meal charges shall be distributed in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the school or Corporation during the school year. Additionally, the Board's policy and Superintendent's procedure related to meal charges shall be distributed to all Corporation staff responsible for policy enforcement, including Corporation food service employees, accounting staff, and all other staff involved in enforcing any aspect of the meal charge policy. This information can also be found about this procedure can also be found <https://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/departments/food-services>

The Corporation's meal charging procedure is as follows:

- Significant negative lunch account balances shall not be permitted. A significant negative lunch account balance is any balance owed in excess of \$10.00;
- If a student has a significant negative lunch account balance, s/he shall be provided a reimbursable meal at full price recommended by the Superintendent, the cost of which shall continue to accrue to his/her negative lunch account balance;
- If a student has a significant negative lunch account balance, the student shall not be permitted to charge any à la carte food or beverage items;
- Each time a student charges for a meal, parents/guardians will be notified via the automated letter system within the Corporation's point of sale software daily until the balance is paid. Additionally, contact will be made with the parent communication system 2 times a quarter.
- If a student repeatedly comes to school with no lunch and no money, food service employees must report this to their immediate supervisor who will report it to the

building principal as this may be a sign of abuse or neglect and the proper authorities should be contacted;

- If food services staff suspects that a student may be abusing this policy as evidenced by 5 consecutive instances, verbal notice from administration will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that if he/she continues to abuse this policy, the privileges of an alternative meal will be refused.
- There will be Free and Reduced Meal Applications available to families yearly. They can complete them online via Skyward Family Access or complete a paper copy available at each school.
- All accounts must be settled at the end of each semester. Letters will be sent home daily to students who have any negative balances. Significant negative balances  $\geq$  -\$10 not paid by the end of the semester will force the Corporation to take action to collect unpaid funds by means of collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method deemed necessary by the Corporation. The significant negative balance debts are then considered “delinquent debt” and are sent to the collection agency. At this point it is deemed “bad debt” by the department and is reimbursed to the nonprofit school food service account with non-federal funds. Any funds received from the collection agency will be receipted into the lending account.

All cafeteria purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins or in the cafeteria lunch line. Online payments can be made via an e-Funds account that is linked to their Skyward account. Cash or checks can be placed in an envelope with the student’s name, ID number, and homeroom teacher on the front and placed within the locked mailboxes. Cash may be accepted in the cafeteria line as well.

The superintendent may develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

### **Inactive Lunch Accounts**

Students who graduate or withdraw from the corporation and have funds left in their lunch/meal food service account have the option to transfer the funds to another student or to receive a refund. The form to do so is available on our webpage. If no form is received within 30 days of the end of the school year or student’s withdrawal date, the student’s lunch/meal account will close and the funds will no longer be available. Unclaimed remaining balances will be transferred to the negative balance fund to offset other negative balances.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation

Adopted: [date]

Revised: [date]