

# Bishop Walsh School

## Meal Charge & Unpaid Meal Balance Policy

### I. PURPOSE

It is the goal of Bishop Walsh School to provide students with a healthy lunch each day. However, unpaid meal balances place a large financial burden on the school. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with USDA Child Nutrition Program requirements and to provide proper accountability for student lunch balances. The intention of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all students have a healthy meal and that no child goes hungry
- Treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line
- Encourage parents/guardians to assume financial responsibility of meal payments and promote self-responsibility of the student
- Establish a consistent practice regarding charges and collections of charges

### II RESPONSIBILITY

#### Food Service Staff

- Responsible for maintaining payment and charge records
- Notifying the administration and business office of outstanding balances
- Notifying students and parents/guardians of outstanding unpaid meal charges
  - Students will receive verbal notification
  - Parent/Guardians will receive written notification

#### Parent/Guardian

- Responsible for maintaining a positive balance in their student(s) lunch account
- Apply for free or reduced price lunches is applicable
- Contact the food service staff to resolve any issues with their student(s) lunch account

### III POLICY

#### Full Pay Students

- Students must prepay or pay at the cash register for all meals and a la cart purchases.
- When a student's account nears zero and/or becomes negative, they will be verbally reminded by cafeteria staff.
- Until the negative balance is paid, the student will not be able to charge ~~their lunch or~~ the regular lunch or a la carte items.
- Students must have a positive account balance or cash in hand to purchase a regular lunch or a la carte items.
- An alternate lunch is available for student's with unpaid lunch balances.

#### Free Meal Benefit

- Free status students will be able to receive a free lunch each day.

- A la carte items must be prepaid or paid with cash at the time of purchase.

#### Reduced Meal Benefit

- Reduced status students will be able to receive lunch at the appropriate reduced lunch fee each day.
- A la carte items must be prepaid or paid with cash at the time of purchase.
- A student with a negative lunch balance will not be able to purchase the regular lunch or a la carte items.
- A Student with a negative lunch balance will be able to receive an alternate lunch.

#### Financial Responsibility

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the cafeteria.
- Notices of low balances will be verbally communicated to the student.
- Notices of negative balances will be e-mailed to parents/guardians from the business office.

#### Online Lunch Account Access

- The school cafeteria maintains a computerized point-of-sale system that maintains a record of all monies deposited and spent for each student.
- Parents/Guardians can access their students' cafeteria balance online at any time through their PowerSchool Account.
  - Instructions for accessing the online system are e-mailed to all families near the beginning of the school year
  - Additional instructions and assistance for the online system can be requested by contacting the Business Office.

#### Payments

- Student lunch accounts are to be paid in advance directly at the school cafeteria by cash or check made payable to *Bishop Walsh School*.
- Payments can also be made online via ACH or Credit Card (subject to processing fees).
- Funds should be maintained in student accounts to reduce the possibility that a child will be unable to purchase lunch.
- Any remaining balance in a student's account at the end of the school year will be carried over to the next school year.

### Refunds

In order to receive a refund for a withdrawn or graduating student, please submit a written request to the Business Office. An e-mail request is also acceptable.

Students who are graduating at the end of the year may also transfer remaining funds to a sibling's account upon request.

### Unclaimed Funds

Unclaimed funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will become the property of Bishop Walsh School.

If a student is without lunch money on a regular basis, administration will investigate the situation more closely to determine if further action is needed. If financial hardship exists, families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child(ren).