

## North Kitsap School District Meal Charging Procedures

The purpose of our meal charging procedure is to ensure compliance with the USDA Child Nutrition Program while reducing unpaid meal debts. A copy of this procedure is provided to all parents at the beginning of each school year, as well as to parents of new students entering the District during the year. A copy of the procedure can also be found on the NKSD's website at [www.nkschools.org](http://www.nkschools.org).

### **Food Service Department:**

The North Kitsap School District's Food Service Department provides students with healthy, tasty meals. We value the positive impact wholesome, regular meals have on a student's academic success, so students will always have access to reimbursable meals.

To ensure hungry children are fed, Food Service cashiers will not deny any student a breakfast or lunch which meets the USDA requirements for a reimbursable meal, regardless of the balance on their Food Service account. The cashier will not single-out students unable to pay by asking them to tell their parents to send money, by requiring they work for their meal, by stamping their hands or by any other method. The cashier may ask if the student has brought money.

### **Parent / Guardian Responsibility:**

A Food Service account is automatically set up for each student as soon as they enroll in the District. Meals may be pre-paid by adding funds to this account. It is the responsibility of each student's parent or legal guardian to ensure their student has enough funds in their Food Service account to cover the cost of their student's meals. Funds may be added by sending in a check or cash to the student's school or payments may be made online with a debit or credit card through Skyward/Family Access - <https://www02.wrdc.wa-k12.net/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=wnkitsas71/fwemnu01.w>. There is no online fee associated with depositing money via Skyward Family Access. For efficiency and to reduce the possibility of lost and/or stolen money, we encourage parents to utilize the online payment option. Payments made online are immediately posted to students' accounts.

If a student does not have enough money in their Food Service account to cover the cost of a meal, credit will be extended to the student to receive a reimbursable meal. Credit will not be granted to cover the cost for: ala carte items such as juice or milk, single entrees or second meals. Any student who chooses to take a second meal will be charged the full cost of that meal; currently \$4.50 for lunch and \$2.75 for breakfast. There must be adequate funds on the student's account to cover the full cost of the second meal or any ala carte item they select.

We encouraged Parents/Guardians to regularly monitor, via Skyward, their student's meal activity to avoid accumulating excessive charges. Parents may contact the Food Service office at any time if they wish to block their student's account in order to prevent the purchase of ala carte or single entrees. A full reimbursable meal will never be denied to any student unless the parent or legal guardian has directed us to.

**Meal Payment Collection:**

Unpaid meal charges place a substantial financial burden upon our Food Service Department and the North Kitsap School District. The Food Service office will notify parents as early as possible and at regular intervals when negative Food Service balances arise. The District will communicate with parents and guardians via our telephone messaging system, letters, and emails.

If after multiple requests for payment, unpaid Food Service balances continue to escalate, the account will be referred to the District's accounting office for further collection attempts or to work out a payment arrangement.

If a student is without funds in the account on a consistent basis, administration may investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If a financial hardship exists, families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits for their child.

**Free / Reduced-Price Meal Applications:**

Families may apply for free or reduced-price meals any time after August 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year or anytime during the year if their financial situation changes. Once approved, eligibility status remains in place throughout the entire school year. Applications can be completed online with Skyward/Family Access - <https://www02.wrdc.wa-k12.net/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=wnkitsas71/fwemnu01.w> Paper applications are also available at your student's school and they can be mailed directly to the Food Service office or dropped off at your student's school. If approved, benefits begin immediately. They cannot be back dated prior to the date the application was processed. For this reason, we highly encourage parents and guardians to complete an application on or before the first day of school in order to avoid unnecessary meal charges.

**Refunds:**

Parents and guardians of withdrawn or graduating students may request a refund of any balance remaining in the account by contacting the Food Service office via telephone, email or US mail. If a student has siblings enrolled in the District, funds will automatically be transferred between the students' accounts at the start of the next school year. Leftover funds from one academic year will roll over into the next school year. Parents and guardians may also request to have any remaining balance transferred as a donation to assist other parents to pay for their meal charges. When students leave the District with positive balances on their account, every attempt will be made to refund the money to the parent/guardian. All unclaimed balances are forwarded to the state for holding as unclaimed property, where they may be claimed.

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