

Cafeteria Meal Charging Guidelines

The EVSC strongly discourages meal charges but understands there are instances when a student may need assistance with meal funds; therefore, the following guidelines for meal charges and collections will apply. Parents have the responsibility to provide a meal from home, provide money for the student to obtain a meal or to apply for federal meal assistance through the Free and Reduced Meal program.

- a. Free and Reduced Meal applications are available online, in each school office or by contacting the Food & Nutrition Office at 435-8258.
 - b. Students are expected to pay for lunch or bring lunch from home until the household receives written notification of free or reduced status. Any negative balance accumulated before a student receives written approval must be paid in order to bring the negative account to zero.
2. At the **high school** level, once a student's account reaches a negative balance of \$15, a student must obtain an IOU slip from the school office if he/she does not have money in hand or in the meal account. Meals cannot be charged without this slip, and the student is expected to pay the IOU back the following day.
3. **Elementary** and **middle school** students will be allowed to charge a meal when the need arises, but parents are expected to take steps to bring the negative balance to zero or a positive amount in a timely manner.
4. Students are informed at the cash register when their meal account needs funds. Payment reminders are sent home on a weekly basis with elementary students who have a negative balance, bi-weekly *Communicate* courtesy calls are made to all households with a negative balance of \$10.00 or more, and twice a year notification letters are sent by US mail to households with a balance of \$20.00 or more to inform them of the negative balance and outline payment options.
5. A la Carte food may not be charged, and students with a negative account balance may not purchase a la carte food.
6. Parents are encouraged to use LinQ Connect for tracking their student's balance and to set up automatic low balance reminders. Payments into student accounts may also be made by using LinQconnect.com.
7. Student accounts with a negative balance of \$50.00 or more are sent letters by US mail advising the household that if there is no attempt to make a payment (partial payments are accepted) within a two week period of time, the negative meal account balance may be turned over to an outside collection agency which will incur additional court costs.
8. EVSC adult staff will be limited to one meal charge.
9. Refunds and unclaimed funds: For withdrawn students, a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted within sixty (60) days. An email request is also acceptable. If unclaimed, these funds will then become the property of EVSC Food and Nutrition Department and placed in a donation account.

Should you have questions, please call the Office of Food and Nutrition at 435-8258 or email Melissa.laurence@evsck12.com