

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PELHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL

STUDENTS: FOOD SERVICES COLLECTIONS

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures through the district. Unpaid meal charges place a financial burden on the food service department which results in a financial strain on the general operating budget. The goals of this policy are:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges
- To treat all students equitably and with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts
- To support positive situations between district staff, students, and parent/guardians to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish policies that are age appropriate.
- To encourage parent/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

2. Scope of Responsibility:

The Food Service Department: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district of outstanding balances. The food service department is also responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardians of low or outstanding balances.

The School District: Responsible for ensuring that all students have access to a meal each and every day, creating a line of communication between families and the food service department, and supporting the food service department in collection activities.

The Parent/Guardian: Payment of charged meals.

3. Administration:

Free and Reduced Lunch Students

- A) Free lunch status students are entitled to a free meal every day.
- B) Reduced lunch status students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of ten (10) reduced price meals which will be known as the account cap. When the child reaches the account cap they will only be offered a designated meal alternate. The meal alternate will be charged to the child's lunch account at the reduced rate. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service department.

All Other Students

- A) Elementary school students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of ten (10) full price meals which will be known as the account cap. When the child reaches the account cap they will only be offered a designated meal alternate ~~(Ex. Cheese sandwich with fruit and vegetable)~~. The meal alternate will be charged to the child's lunch account at the regular lunch rate. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service department.
- B) Middle School students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of five (5) full price meals which will be known as the account cap. When the child reaches the account cap they will only be offered a designated meal alternate. The meal alternate will

be charged to the child's lunch account at the regular lunch rate. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service department.

- C) High School students will be allowed to have a negative account balance up to a maximum dollar equivalent of two (2) full price meals which will be known as the account cap. When the child reaches the account cap they will only be offered a designated meal alternate. The meal alternate will be charged to the child's lunch account at the regular lunch rate. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service department.

Balances Owed

- A) The food service department will send periodic notices to parent/guardians of low or outstanding balances. The food service department should work proactively with parents/guardians to keep them informed of their students' balances.
- B) The ARPS Family Center will be available upon request to act as a liaison between parents/guardians and the food service department.
- C) The school district will take into account individual circumstances that may affect the parent/guardian's ability to pay. Balances owed may be partially or entirely waived at the discretion of the superintendent or his/her designee.
- D) Charges outstanding at year end will carry forward into the next school year. Seniors must make arrangements with the school district (food service department) to fully or partially pay outstanding balances prior to graduation. Failure to do so may prohibit the student's participation in graduation exercises. This action should only be taken in extreme circumstances and only after the school district has exhausted all other means of recouping the accrued overdue balance. The school district will document all attempts to communicate with the parents/guardians.

Remaining Balances

- A) All seniors will receive a notice in May of remaining funds in their lunch account and may elect to transfer those funds to a sibling's account or receive a refund. All refund requests must be submitted to the Food Service Department and then forwarded to the Business Office for payment.

Unclaimed Funds

- A) All refunds must be requested within one year of graduation. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Food Service Department.

APPROVED:

Region—March 10, 2015