

Wayland Union Schools Food Service Department

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Wayland Union Schools Meal Charge Administrative Guidelines (AG 8500D) Procedures

Effective Date: May 17, 2022

Background:

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service, school districts are not obligated to provide meals, nor extend credit, to students who do not have lunch money or do not bring a lunch to school.

However, Wayland Union Schools recognizes the need to provide nutritious meals to students so they are best prepared to stay focused and learn during the school day. The Food Service Department wants all students fed and ready to learn, but must do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Upon enrollment, all students have a Food Service account created in order to properly account for meals provided, as well as for maintaining positive and negative account balances.

Policy:

Meal charge policy that prevents lunch shaming with the specifics outlined in State Aid Section 31k as follows:

- Prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to wear a wristband or hand stamp.
- Prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to perform chores or other work to pay for school meals.
- Prohibits the requiring of students to dispose of a meal after it has been served because the student is unable to pay for the meal or has a negative balance.
- Prohibits the direct communication with a student about a negative balance unless your district has unsuccessfully attempted to contact the student's parent or legal guardian first through telephone, mail, and electronic mail.
- Prohibits discussing a negative balance with a student in the presence of other students.

The district believes that school meals are an important part of every student reaching their full academic potential. Therefore, meals shall be allowed to be charged and no alternate meal will be offered regardless of the student's current account balance. All meals served will continue to increase the negative balance of the student's account at the expense and responsibility of the student's family.

When a student's account balance reaches \$5.00 or less, a low, or negative balance notification will be sent to the parent/guardian electronically. Notifications will continue to be sent electronically on a daily basis until funds are provided for the student's account to bring the balance to above \$5.00.

Student account balances for all grade levels shall be set at a level not to exceed a negative balance in the amount of -\$10.

Snack, beverage or "a la carte" items shall not be charged under any circumstance where a student does not have the ability to pay for the full cost of the item(s) at the time of purchase. Under no circumstance will a student be allowed to make a purchase with an account balance of \$0.00, or negative. This includes second meals and entrée only purchases.

Negative balance procedure for elementary level students, including Pine Street:

- A notification slip will be given to teachers to include in paperwork being sent home to parents/guardians. Additionally, Food Service staff will reach out to parents via phone or email as needed.

Negative balance procedure for secondary level students:

- Food Service Administrative Office will reach out to parents/guardians when balances exceed the negative balance threshold of -\$10 by email and/or phone contact.

When a student account balance reaches a negative balance of -\$25, the Food Service Director will alert the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations who will then determine next steps, which may include some, or all of the following:

- 1) Determining whether or not the parent should be contacted and advised to provide lunch from home for the student;
- 2) Contacting the Department of Social Services on behalf of the student; and/or
- 3) Contacting a collection agency.