

## SOUTHEAST LOCAL SCHOOLS

### FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT

#### *Meal Charge Policy*

The purpose of this policy is to address the need for school food service authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which includes, the availability of an alternate meal. Such a policy ensures that the school food services department, school administrators, parents, and students have a shared understanding of expectations in these situations.

The goal of the Southeast Local Schools is to provide students with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid meal charges place a financial strain on the food services department and the district. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment (charged meal), the Southeast Local Schools provide this policy as a courtesy to those students who forget or lose their lunch money or parents with a temporary financial issue.

#### **Meal Charge Policy Goals:**

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding meal charges and collection of charges
- To treat all students with dignity and respect in the serving line regarding meal accounts
- To establish policies that are age appropriate
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student with regards to their lunch account

#### **Meal Charge Limits:**

- When a student has reached the charge limit they will be given an **alternative** lunch until the negative balance is paid in full. They will not be served a breakfast.
- An **alternative** lunch will consist of a sandwich, vegetable or fruit, and milk.
- Students with a negative lunch account balance will not be permitted to purchase ala carte items.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of negative balances by letters sent home with the students (elementary school) or mailed home. Phone calls will be made to parents/guardians as students near the maximum limit for negative balances.
- End of the Year unpaid meal charges for underclassmen will be carried over to the next school year. Unpaid meal charges for Senior's will be added to any unpaid fees that they may have and will need to be paid prior to graduation.

### Elementary School Meal Charge Limits

- Paid lunch status students may charge up to \$18.25 (equivalent of 5 lunches and 5 breakfasts)
- Reduced lunch status students may charge up to \$7.00 (equivalent of 10 lunches and 10 breakfasts)

### Middle School and High School Meal Charge Limits:

- Paid lunch status students may charge up to \$22.00 (equivalent of 5 lunches and 5 breakfasts)
- Reduced lunch status students may charge up to \$7.00 (equivalent of 10 lunches and 10 breakfasts)
- During the last three weeks of school, Senior's (12<sup>th</sup> grade), will not be permitted to charge to a negative balance.

### Payment Options:

- Parents/Guardians may pay in advance by sending in a check or money to be put on their child's lunch account.
- Parents/guardians may also use an on-line payment service made available to you called MySchoolBucks. This user friendly system offers various options for parents/guardians to make on-line payments for lunch and breakfast purchases. For more information, go to [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com).

### Free/Reduced School Meal Applications

- If your family has a financial hardship or change of income your child/children may qualify for free or reduced lunch status.
- Applications are available on-line or in the main office of your child's school. Applications can be turned in any time after July 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the new school year or during the course of the school year.

### Lunch Account Refunds:

- A written request for refunds for a withdrawn or graduating student must be sent to the following:  
Southeast Local Schools  
Director of Operations  
9048 Dover Road  
Apple Creek, OH 44606
- Parents/guardians may request that remaining funds from a seniors account be transferred to a siblings account