

May 4, 2018

**Norwalk Public Schools
Procedures for Cafeteria Charges**

School Principals or their designee will be responsible for assisting in the collection of Free and Reduced Meal Applications each school year. All families are encouraged to apply for Free and Reduced Meals to determine if they qualify. Applications can be submitted throughout the year if family circumstances have changed. The District will utilize the services of the District ELL Welcome Center to assist families who have limited English language proficiency with completing the application.

Since significant Free and Reduced debt can occur at the beginning of the school year, the timeliness of the applications is crucial. Principals, or their Designee, are responsible for the timely return of the Free and Reduced Meal Applications to Central Kitchen, who is responsible for processing the applications and ensuring compliance with the USDA National School Lunch Program.

Note: At each school transition (Middle School, High School), Principals should pay particular attention to new students who have received Free and Reduced Meals in the past.

Each week during the school year (*FS will designate day of week for staff*), Cafeteria staff will provide Principals an Outstanding Charge Report and Principals, or their Designee, will contact families with a \$10 negative balance to bring their account up to date. Parents are encouraged to monitor their outstanding balances through My School Bucks and/or via Powerschool notifications.

Elementary and Middle schools – Elementary and middle school students will not be denied access to receive a meal even if they have a negative balance, but the school will continue to make efforts to work with families to bring their negative balance up to date. As part of the District's effort to collect delinquent balances, the Food Service Department will send an automated email on a weekly basis to each family, advising them of their negative balance, and requesting they bring their account current. In addition, school personnel will reach out to the family by phone to advise them of the delinquent balance and to attempt collection. Cafeteria debt will be included in any existing school procedures regarding the collection of student financial obligations: i.e. – Library debt, textbook debt, athletic and band debt, and participation in graduation or promotion ceremonies. Effective with the 2018-19 school year, at the end of the fiscal year, it shall be the responsibility of the individual school to pay off any delinquent Cafeteria balances that may exist for their students. Schools may use their student based budgets, discretionary school funds, or fundraising accounts to offset cafeteria charge balances.

High schools - If a student meal account reaches an outstanding balance of \$20, no lunch will be served on credit to the affected student until the account is brought up to date. A student

may continue to purchase meals with cash on a daily basis while an outstanding balance exists. As part of the District's effort to collect delinquent balances, the Food Service Department will send an automated email on a weekly basis to each family, advising them of their negative balance, and requesting they bring their account current. In addition, school personnel will reach out to the family by phone to advise them of the delinquent balance and to attempt collection. Cafeteria debt will be included in any existing school procedures regarding the collection of student financial obligations: i.e. – Library debt, textbook debt, athletic and band debt, and participation in graduation or promotion ceremonies. Effective with the 2018-19 school year, at the end of the fiscal year, it shall be the responsibility of the individual school to pay off any delinquent Cafeteria balances that may exist for their students. Schools may use their student based budgets, discretionary school funds, or fundraising accounts to offset cafeteria charge balances.