

STANDARD OF PRACTICE
RI SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CAFETERIA MEAL CHARGES

Guiding Principle

Rhode Island School for the Deaf's goal is to provide students with healthy meals each day. Breakfast and lunch are offered daily at school. Families who wish to participate in the lunch program for their child have the option to purchase lunch daily in lieu of bringing food from home.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Open and clear communication is essential for the program to run smoothly and for all charges to be paid and current. Unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our small Food Services Department. Notices of low or deficit balances shall be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year.

RISDeaf and CHARTWELLS Food Service encourage parents/guardians to prepay meals for their children through the convenient Nutrikids website, thereby eliminating negative balances.
www.MyNutrikids.com

Purpose

The purpose of this practice is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

RISDeaf wishes to establish clear and consistent meal account procedures. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department, therefore efforts to keep accounts current are important.

The goals of this practice are:

- To support positive interactions with school staff, school business policies, students and parents/guardians to the maximum extent possible.

To establish policies that are age appropriate.

To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

To establish a consistent practice regarding charges and collection of charges.

To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.

Standard of Practice

In order to provide students and parents/guardians with the best possible service, clarity, and accountability surrounding the school lunch program, the following procedures regarding student lunch account balances were implemented effective August 30, 2017.

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Students are expected to pay for their meals at the time of service. Students paying full and/or reduced prices are encouraged to prepay by the week or month whenever possible. Payment may be made at school or through the food service website at www.MyNutriKids.com.

Full Pay Students

Students will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate each day. Elementary students will be allowed to charge a maximum of seven meals to their account after their balance reaches zero. Middle School students and High School students will be allowed to charge a maximum of five meals to their account after their balance reaches zero. This ensures that if lunch money is forgotten or lost, the child can still receive a hot meal. Once a student has charged the maximum, no further charging will be accepted. He/she will be offered a designated menu alternate in a brown paper bag, as if brought from home. Sample: cheese or sunflower butter sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the standard rate.

Free Meal Benefit

Free status students will be provided a free standard breakfast and lunch each day. Free Lunch Status Students will not be allowed to have a negative account balance, since free lunch status allows a child to receive a free meal every day. This does not include a la carte purchases occasionally offered for sale. A la carte purchases if desired (i.e., bag of potato chips or a brownie, etc.) must be paid for separately.

Reduced Meal Benefit

Reduced meal students will be charged for standard meals at the published reduced rate. A la carte purchases if desired (i.e., bag of potato chips or a brownie, etc.) must be paid for separately. Reduced meal status students will be allowed to charge a maximum of seven (7) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those seven meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge further meals, however he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: cheese or sunflower sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk packaged in a brown paper bag, as if brought from home. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the reduced rate.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the RI School for the Deaf food service program. Unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our school and cannot be sustained. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year with the expectation that the balance will be paid as quickly as possible.

At no time will RISDeaf staff hold children publicly accountable for their parent/guardian's unpaid school lunch bills by treating them in a manner which shames or brings attention to their negative account balance.

Application for Free/Reduced Meals

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Free/reduced applications are a part of all paperwork provided to families of students at the start of each school year and for all new students transferring in to RISDeaf during the school year. These applications are available in 49 languages. They are also found on our school web site.

Parents and guardians expected to submit free/reduced hot lunch application forms at the start of each school year as well as any point during the school year when their household information or income changes.

Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year and are available during registration or from the school office. The school is happy to offer confidential support to parents/guardians who would like help in completing the forms. The decision to apply and the final application responsibility, however, lies with the parents/guardians. Information included in the application is kept confidential and is not shared with any other agency.

Sales and Account Balances

The school cafeterias possess a computerized point of sale/cash register system that maintain a record of all monies deposited and spent for each student and said record will be made available to the parent/guardian upon request. The school's food service agent shall inform parents/guardians that meals can be paid for in advance and that the balances maintained in their child's account to minimize the possibility that the child may be without lunch money on any given day. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to deposit some monies in advance on a regular basis to help keep a balance available for the student's meals.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the Business Office will investigate the situation more closely, including contacting the parent/guardian for payment and/or encouraging the parent/guardian to apply for free or reduced price meals if appropriate. The school social worker is available to visit or to work with families who may need to explore other resources and options.

If a negative balance continues to persist, the school will contact the parent/guardian to work together to design a reasonable payment plan. All charges not paid before the end of the school year will be carried forward into the next school year.

First Reading: July 12, 2017

Second Reading: August 2, 2017

Approved: August 3, 2019

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Updated August 13, 2019

Please return this form to the School Secretary

I confirm that I have read and understand the Rhode Island School for the Deaf School Lunch balance procedures.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please note: We have started a Lunch HELP fund. This is strictly voluntary.

If you feel that you wish to donate one time donation of \$5-\$10 to be added to a collective school fund to help students who may need financial help to occasionally buy a hot meal at school, please circle YES below

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YES and enclose your donation by check or cash.

There is no obligation to participate.

Thank you for your help.