

Bloomfield Hills Meal Accountability Procedures

The purpose of having a meal accountability policy is to establish consistent and clear student meal procedures throughout the district.

Goals:

- To ensure that students are offered a healthy meal while at school
- To treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line
- To foster clear and positive communication among staff, students and parents/guardians
- To establish consistent practices that are used throughout the district regarding meal accountability procedures
- To communicate the obligation of meal payments to parents/guardians and to promote self-responsibility of their students

Scope of Responsibility:

Food and Nutrition Department/Aramark

- o Responsible for maintaining student meal account records
- o Responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian with phone calls, emails or written documentation when meal balances are above \$10
- o Verbally communicating low balance information to students at the register when their meal account balance is below \$0 or when it is too low for them to purchase a lunch at their status level (free, reduced or paid) the next time they come through the line

District

- o Have Robo-calls go out each Sunday evening to students with account balances below \$5
- o Provide payment options on-line to ensure timely payment alternatives for families that can be done at home

Parent/Guardian

- o It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the means for their student to be properly fed and ready to learn by:
 - Sending a lunch from home
 - Providing money for the student(s) to purchase a school meal
 - Complete the free/reduced meal application to determine eligibility for meal benefits

Meal Payments

- Personal checks (preferred for tracking purposes) and cash deposits are accepted at the student's home school
- For convenience, deposits may also be made by electronic check or credit/debit card by clicking on <https://www.bloomfield.org/departments/lunch/deposit-into-lunch-account> and choosing your student's school to load funds onto their account
- Parents/guardians may view what their students are purchasing on-line by going to <https://bloomfield.org> and visiting MyBloomfield
- Parents/guardians can view menus and nutrition information by visiting <https://www.bloomfield.org/departments/lunch>

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- All students are eligible to apply for free or reduced meal benefits

- Applications may now be filled out and submitted on-line
 - Applications must be filled out annually unless the family and district have been notified that they qualify as “direct certification” of benefits
 - Applications can be filled out at any time of the school year but have no retroactive approval of meals purchased previous to the application approval.
 - Applications are available in your student’s school office or on-line by visiting <https://www.bloomfield.org/departments/lunch> and clicking on the on-line application on the right hand side of the page
 - Translation assistance is available for families that need it. Please let your student’s building staff know or by calling or food service offices @ (248) 341-5671
 - A determination letter will be sent to parents notifying them whether or not their student(s) have been approved for free or reduced meals
 - If a notification has not been received within ten days please contact the food and nutrition office to ensure the application has been received – (248) 341-5671
- Although not required by law through the National School Lunch Act or the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, limited meal charging will be allowed as a courtesy to families under the following conditions:

Elementary School and Wing Lake Meal Purchasing Procedures

- No ala carte or milk purchases may be charged
- Students and teachers/paras will be notified verbally at the register when the student’s account balance is low. When balance exceeds -\$5 teachers will be asked to convey a message to parents.
- Parents are responsible for immediate payment when a student’s account becomes negative
- If no resolution occurs, school administration will be notified and will meet with the parent/guardian to obtain repayment or request a completed free/reduced meal application
- Unpaid charges will be added to the list of any other outstanding school fees or unpaid fines at the end of the school year
- Payment must be paid in full to the Food and Nutrition Department

Middle school and High School Meal Purchasing Procedures

- No ala carte or milk purchases may be charged
 - Students will be notified verbally at the register when their account balance is low
 - After the \$10 limit is exceeded, students will be offered for purchase one alternative meal based on what the café has on hand at the time consisting of a protein, grain, fruit, vegetable and milk and will not be the choice of the student. This alternative meal will be charged to the student’s account.
 - Parents are then responsible for providing a meal from home or immediate payment of the negative account
 - If no resolution occurs, school administration will meet with the parent/guardian to obtain repayment or request a completed free/reduced meal application
 - Unpaid charges will be added to the list of any other outstanding school fees or unpaid fines at the end of the school year and any unpaid fine policies will be imposed
- In case of an emergency, a parent may contact the Food Service Office at (248) 341-5671 and request for a student to be allowed to charge a meal. The parent must agree to repay the meal charge the following day. This process applies to all grade levels

Federal Regulations Regarding Annual Reimbursements to School Nutrition Programs

Student charges and alternative meals which are determined to be uncollectible should be recorded as bad debt expense. "Bad debts" are not included as program expenditures in the School Nutrition Program. The Office of Management and Budget's Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments", Attachment B, Item 7, Bad Debt http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/fedreg/2005/083105_a87a.pdf covers these situations. This directive states that bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectible accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs, are unallowable. As a result, the district's General Fund must repay the School Nutrition Program for these debts.

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