

8300: NEGATIVE BALANCE POLICY FOR THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

In order to provide students and parents in the Scituate School District with the best possible service, clarity, and accountability surrounding the school lunch program, the following procedures regarding student lunch account balances are *effective as of the start of the 2019/2020 school year*.

1. The Scituate School Department (herein after referred to as SSD) and Chartwells encourage parents to prepay meals for their children. Prepayments for lunch and breakfast can be made through the www.MySchoolBucks.com website. Cash and check payments will continue to be accepted at each school; however, payments made through MySchoolBucks.com or by check are preferred.
2. At the time of student registration, parents/guardians will be provided the opportunity to allow the SSD access to a credit card account in the event lunch debt exceeds \$20.00.
3. Students may charge their accounts only for a meal – students will not be permitted to charge a la carte items.
4. Lunch program debt will be closely monitored. Automated email reminders will be sent to parents/guardians for balances between \$5.00 and \$74.99 on a weekly basis. Lunch debt between \$20.00 and \$74.99 will also receive an automated phone call on a weekly basis. Family debt of \$75.00 or more will receive monthly telephone outreach with follow-up written correspondence by the Director of Administration and Finance. When there is no response to the telephone outreach, debt collection activities may commence.
5. Parents are strongly encouraged to submit free/reduced hot lunch application forms yearly as well as when their household information or income changes. Applications can be submitted at any time and are available during registration or through Chartwells and individual schools as well as on the district's website at www.scituateschoolsri.net. While the SSD strongly encourages families to apply for free/reduced meal benefits, the final application responsibility lies with the parents.
6. In extreme hardship situations the building administrator may authorize a onetime exception to this policy, communicating same to the lunch program supervisor.
7. Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor their students' breakfast/lunch account activity through the MySchoolBucks.com online system. This system can be used to confirm that payments have been received, make payments, and monitor account activity. MySchoolBucks.com also has the ability to automatically send out balance alerts to parents as their students draw down from their accounts. To register, parents may go directly to www.MySchoolBucks.com or follow the link through the SSD website at www.scituateschoolsri.net.
8. Both the SSD and Chartwells are committed to providing meals to students who choose to participate in the program but also feel very strongly that there is a responsibility on the part of the parents and/or guardians and adult students to satisfy all financial obligations to the lunch program.
9. All lunch debt must be resolved at the time of withdrawal (e.g., graduation, waiver of attendance requirement, approval of home instruction, transfer).
10. A parent/guardian of a student may sign a waiver to no longer allow a child to purchase or charge breakfast or hot lunch at school and, thus, the account would be closed which would preclude the student's participation in the school lunch program. The parent/guardian may activate an account so closed via a written request to the food service manager.
11. The SSD may initiate debt collection activities or file a claim in Small Claims Court when individual student debt exceeds \$75.00. When debt exceeds \$75.00, a late fee of \$10.00 per month will be assessed until the debt is resolved.

Adopted 8/6/2019

Cecka A. McCoenick
Chairperson

8/6/2019
Approval Date