



Adam Koch
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Otsego Local Schools

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OTSEGO LOCAL SCHOOLS UNPAID MEAL CHARGES POLICY

Otsego Local Schools participates in “The National School Lunch Program”, a USDA funded government program. USDA policy requires all federal school meal programs to have a written and clearly communicated policy to address unpaid meal charges. The purpose of this policy is to:

- To ensure that no child goes hungry and they have access to the NSLP approved healthy meal.
- To treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line, especially regarding meal accounts.
- To encourage parents/guardians to assume responsibility of meal payments and promote self-responsibility for age appropriate students.

The following is the Otsego Local Schools Meal Charge Policy:

- If a student does not have sufficient funds on their account or cash on hand, we will allow them to overspend their account by three (3) lunch meals at the full paid rate. A la Carte items may not be charged at any time. Students who have a meal tray in hand at the register will **not** have that meal taken away or substituted.
- Once the overspend of three lunches occurs, the student may not be able to overspend for breakfast and the student may be provided an alternate lunch meal that meets the NSLP meal pattern (Meat/Meat Alternate, Grains, Milk, Fruit or Vegetable) for school lunches. The meal will still be charged to the student’s account and the student will be encouraged to start packing their lunch and eating breakfast at home.
- Communication from district personnel about the overspend of the account may be made by discreetly reminding students at the cash register, having private age appropriate conversations with students, written communications, phone calls, emails or text messaging. Parents are encouraged to use our automated payment service to track their student’s accounts.
- If the financial obligations of the meal account are not met and the parent/guardian fails to provide the student with a bagged lunch or funds for lunch, school district personnel may be asked to intercede on behalf of the student. The district may contact the Department of Human Services or other appropriate agency to address the student’s needs. The Otsego Local School District may seek a court order for Garnishment of Wages at the parents/guardian’s place of employment regarding large negative balances.
- Outstanding balances due to the district must be paid in full for a student to participate in graduation activities and possibly other activities in the school district. Lunch negative balance fees will be assessed every new school year during registration.
- If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration may investigate the situation and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child.
- Students will be discouraged from overspending on their lunch accounts after April 15th due to the end of the school year. Balances owed must be paid at the end of each school year.
- Positive balances on a school lunch account will be carried over into the following school year.

Refunds for withdrawn or graduating students can be made by written or email request. The option to transfer money from an exiting student to a sibling’s account is available. All households approved for reduced meal benefits must receive a refund when leaving the district.

Transfers from one sibling account to another sibling account are available. Please contact our Food Service Supervisor.

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

The Otsego Local School District adheres to Title VI, Title IX, ADA, and Section 504; thus, does not discriminate in educational programs and employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap.



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