

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

The Warwick Public School District and the Food Service Vendor are committed to providing meals to students who choose to participate in the program, however, there is a responsibility on the part of the students and parents to satisfy all financial obligations to the lunch program.

The Warwick Public School District and the Food Service Vendor encourage parents and guardians to prepay meals for their children thereby eliminating situations that could develop during lunchtime over money owed. Prepayments for lunch and breakfast can be made via check or through the online payment website. Cash and check payments will continue to be accepted at each school, however, payment made through the online payment system is preferred. Adults do not have charge on account privileges. Meals must be prepaid or be paid for at the time a lunch is requested.

Warwick Public Schools acknowledges that student performance is impacted by a student's food intake during any given day. Warwick Public Schools will allow students with lunch/breakfast debt to charge a breakfast and/or lunch, with payment expected to be made within the next two (2) school days. Students with funds owed will not be allowed to buy a la carte items.

The following procedures for clearing student lunch account balances will be implemented.

Elementary (K-5)

1. A weekly list showing students that have funds owed to the lunch program will be generated by the Food Service Coordinator. This list, along with letters addressed to the parents/guardians of students with negative balances will be sent to the building principals. The letter will indicate what is owed, provide information on how to make restitution, and provide information on how to apply for free or reduced lunch.
2. The building principal will contact the parent to alert him/her of the letter and will send the letter home.
3. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within one week from the first notice, the Food Service Coordinator will mail out a 2nd notice.

4. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within a week of the 2nd notice the Coordinator of Non-Instructional Services will send a letter to reinforce the need for payment before moving forward with formal debt collections.
5. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within a week from the 3rd notice, the Executive Director of Operations and Finance will notify families that the account is being turned over to the legal department for pursuit through small claims court.
6. Families owing money at the end of the year will be called in for a conference with the principal.

Secondary (6-12)

7. Secondary schools will receive a list & 1st notice letters weekly of those students owing more than Five Dollars (\$5.00) generated by the Food Service Coordinator. The letter will indicate what is owed, provide information on how to make restitution, and provide information on how to apply for free or reduced lunch.
8. The guidance counselors and administrative team will contact the parent to alert him/her of the letter and will send the letter home.
9. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within one week from the first notice, the Food Service Coordinator will mail out a 2nd notice.
10. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within a week of the 2nd notice the Coordinator of Non-Instructional Services will send a letter to reinforce the need for payment before moving forward with formal debt collections.
11. If the debt is not cleared or a payment plan established within a week from the 3rd notice, the Executive Director of Operations and Finance will notify families that the account is being turned over to the legal department for pursuit through small claims court.
12. Families owing money at the end of the year will be called in for a conference with the principal.

Parents must submit a new lunch application yearly at the start of each new school year. In addition, throughout the course of the school year, when household income changes, parents should submit a new lunch application. Applications can be submitted at any time and are available during registration, the lunch office and through the individual schools, as well as on the district's website. Free/reduced applications will also become a part of all paperwork provided to families of students transferring into Warwick Public Schools. While we strongly encourage families to apply for free/reduced meal benefits, the final application responsibility lies with the parents. Warwick Public Schools cannot wipe out any student balances incurred as a result of a failure to submit meal benefit applications in a timely manner.

Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor their students' breakfast/lunch account activity through the online payment system.

This policy supersedes all previous policies and/or regulations related to Free and Reduced Price Food Services.

Adopted: 11/12/97

Revised: 02/13/07, 8/15/17, 04/11/2019, 5/21/2019

LEGAL REFS.: Federal National School Lunch Act of 1946, (as amended)
 Child Nutrition Act of 1966, (as amended)
 Commodity Distribution Program
 P.L. 91-248 - The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004,
 PL 108-265
 General Laws of R.I., 16-8-7 through 16-8-13

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