

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS/COLLECTIONS/MEAL CHARGE POLICY/PROCEDURES
Revised 5/29/2020(To make adjustments for Act 55 Section 1337)

POLICY: Students may charge meal if they have no money on account or in hand at time of service. No ala carte items may be charged. A student who owes money or who cannot pay for a school meal may not be publicly identified or stigmatized. A student who cannot pay for a school meal may not be required to perform chores or other work to pay for school meals. District can only withhold meals from students if they receive written direction from parent or guardian.

PROCEDURES:

1. Each cashier will answer any questions students may have as they pass through register station. Low balance and negative balance alerts are emailed to parents (District wide) each Tuesday and Thursday. Printed notices are only required for those families without email addresses. Head cashier will call parent to inform them that notice is being sent home. Any written communication shall be sealed in an envelope addressed to parent and labeled "Confidential – to be opened by addressee only". Printed notices should be taken to office on the day printed to be distributed to students that day or next day in homeroom.
2. Head cashier at each building will enforce no a la carte purchases when any student has negative balance (this includes individual milk purchases). A student may not be required to discard a school meal after it is served to student due to student's inability to pay or the amount of money owed for past meals served. Cafeteria staff should not take food from tray. Notify building principal if student continues to take ala carte items without money in account. Notify Accountant or Business Manager of situation.
3. Head Cashier will make at least 2 attempts to call or email or write note or mail letter to parent of any student who owes for five or more meals (includes breakfast and lunch) (EI-**\$12.00 Sec- \$13.75**) to inform parent of negative balance, review meal charge policy, answer any questions, discuss free/reduced application if needed, place restrictions on account as per parent instruction, and arrange for payment of debt. Encourage use of checks. A written letter or note in envelope labeled for parent and given to student for delivery is acceptable. Any written communication shall be sealed in an envelope addressed to parent and labeled "Confidential – to be opened by addressee only".
4. Head cashier to keep simple documentation of dates communications are made and action taken. Review any account reaching **\$25.00** in the negative with Accountant or Business Manager.
5. Accountant or Business Manager will contact parent of any account that is over \$25.00 in the negative. Arrangements will be made for payment. Accounts will be reviewed as needed. Restrictions will be placed on account as per agreement with parent to prevent the account from going any further in the negative. Simple documentation of contact dates and action taken should be recorded. If there is no cooperation or response from parent or account reaches more than **\$50.00** in the negative, this account with history of actions taken will be reviewed with Home School Visitor for possible interaction with

parent. Accounts more than **\$100.00** in the negative, will be turned over to the Business Manager to take further action with the Magisterial District Judge.

6. Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt. Any unpaid meal charges left at the end of current school year, will be carried over into next school year so that collection efforts can continue. Delinquent debt becomes a bad debt when the school district has exhausted its measures to collect money from the student/family (no longer than 1 year). Bad debt will be removed from the Food Service Account through a transfer of funds into the Food Service Account from non-federal sources.
7. Meal Account Refund process: Upon withdraw from West Perry School District, students may request a refund at the register on last day of attendance for any balance below \$5.00. Requests for refunds \$5.00 or greater must be submitted in writing to the Accountant, District Office, smiller@westperry.org
8. Any student who pays full price and leaves a positive meal account balance under \$5.00 in their account upon withdrawing from West Perry School District and does not request a refund on the last day of attendance shall forfeit that amount. West Perry School District will use funds for needy student meal accounts and to pay off past due negative student meal account balances. Any student who leaves positive meal account balance of \$5.00 or greater upon withdrawing from West Perry School District will receive notice by email or phone that balance remains. They will be given a choice to receive a refund or transfer the money to another student account, or donate the money to a needy student meal account.
9. All student households will receive a written copy of this policy at the beginning of each school year and the policy will also be provided to student households that transfer into the district throughout the year. Policy will be posted on the district website (westperry.org) and in the student handbooks.
10. This policy will also be provided to all district administrators and to officials of the food management company (FSMC) that operates the cafeterias within the district.
11. An electronic copy of the free/reduced meal application is available online at paschoolmeals.com and on the district website (westperry.org). A paper copy is available at any school office and the district office.
12. Individuals or community organizations may donate funds to schools to be used for students that have insufficient funds. School may accept donation for direct benefit of students. This revenue must have a separate account or funding number in the general fund so it is not comingled with the food service account revenue. The donated funds may be transferred from the general fund to the food service fund at the appropriate time to offset the delinquent student meal accounts.
13. Donation distribution is as follows: if donor specifies which student or school the donation is for, that direction will be followed. Otherwise, free students with negative

balances will be considered first, reduced price students will be considered next. Full price students will be considered if donor specifies or school counselor/social worker indicates need for short-term funding support.