

PERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS MEAL CHARGING POLICY

Perry Township Schools recognize the importance of good nutrition and are taking steps to assure students access to school meals. These steps include: establishing consistent meal account procedures throughout the district, providing access to applications for Free and Reduced Meals for all families, outlining parent/guardian responsibility for the timely and consistent payment for school meals, and providing oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Perry Township Child Nutrition Department. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment, the Perry Township Schools established the policy, outlined below, as a courtesy to those students in the event that they forget or lose their lunch money.

Full Pay Students PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS WHO DO NOT QUALIFY FOR FREE MEALS ARE EXPECTED TO PREPAY FOR MEALS USING THE ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM, SEND CASH OR CHECKS TO SCHOOL. *If you send a check or cash with your child, please place it in a sealed envelope and write your child's complete name, student ID number and amount enclosed in the envelope.* The parent/guardian of students having a negative balance will be contacted by note, e-mail, telephone call or letter by the child nutrition staff to arrange a payment. While a student's meal account has a negative balance, no charges will be allowed for a la carte items. Approved applications received late in the school year will not remove any current balance due, but will change the cost of school meals from full pay to free or reduced going forward. Parents are responsible for promptly examining each statement, low balance letter, eligibility letter, e-mail, etc., upon receiving it and reporting any irregularities to Perry Township Child Nutrition Department at 317-789-3747.

Reduced Price Meal Benefit. PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS ON REDUCED STATUS ARE EXPECTED TO PREPAY FOR MEALS USING THE ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM, SEND CASH OR CHECKS TO SCHOOL. *If you send a check or cash with your child, please place it in a sealed envelope and write your child's complete name, student ID number and amount enclosed in the envelope.* Reduced status students are eligible to receive a breakfast for **\$0.30** and lunch for **\$0.40** each day. The parent/guardian of students having a negative balance will be contacted by note, e-mail, telephone call or letter by the child nutrition staff to arrange payment. While a student's meal account has a negative balance, no charges will be allowed for a la carte items.

Free Meal Benefit. Free status students are allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. A la carte items **MUST** be paid from the prepaid account.

SNAP (Food Stamp) TANF or in Foster Care/Directly Certified Students. Direct certified students are allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. A la carte items **MUST** be paid from the prepaid account. Direct certified students will be identified every month based on information from the SNAP (Food Stamp Office) or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and they are not required to fill out an application. Parents are responsible for informing the child nutrition office if other students in the household also qualify for free meals. ***Any balance owed prior to being determined eligible will remain the responsibility of the parent/guardian.*** Parents have the right to refuse these benefits. If you **do not** want your child to receive these benefits, you must contact the child nutrition office at 317-789-3747 or email Tresa Henschen at thenschen@perryschools.org.

Parents/Guardians

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the means for their child to be properly fed and ready to learn. This involves either providing money for their child or children to purchase school meals, completing Free/Reduced meal applications each year to determine and/or renew eligibility for free or reduced price meals, or sending a meal from home. We recognize the many financial obligations associated with raising children, and encourage families to complete the application and determine their own eligibility. The process is short and simple and may provide some measure of assistance for your family. We strongly encourage parents/guardians to monitor their child's meal account balance. Parents are responsible for promptly examining each statement, low balance letter, eligibility letter, e-mail, etc., upon receiving it and reporting any irregularities to us. The Child Nutrition Department appreciates your cooperation in maintaining a positive balance in your child's account.

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How to apply: The household application for free and reduced price school meals is available to submit online at www.perryschools.org. Select the Skyward link, top right of the screen, and login to your Family Access Account. You can also request a paper application at your child's school building. Completed applications can be turned in to your child's school office or mailed to: 6548 Orinoco Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46227. If you need more information or help filling out the application, please call 317-789-3738 or 317-789-3747. ***We only need one application per household*** (a household includes all people living together) Applications for free and reduced school meals can be submitted at any time during the school year. Any balance owed prior to being determined eligible will remain the responsibility of the parent/guardian. At any time during the school year, if a family's income decreases or if the household size increases, an application for free or reduced price meals may be completed to determine eligibility.

How to make a payment: To pay online, go to the district website at www.perryschools.org. Select lunch/fee payments link, top right of the screen. This takes you directly to e-Funds for schools. You may also send cash or check to the school office or your child may give it to the cashier in the cafeteria. *If you send a check or cash with your child, please place it in a sealed envelope and write your child's complete name, student ID number and amount enclosed in the envelope.* If you need more information or want to make a payment over the phone with a credit/debit card, please call 317-789-3738 or 317-789-3741. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year.

All school cafeterias utilize computerized point of sale register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student. Itemized meal statements are available online at www.perryschools.org. Select the Skyward link, top right of the screen, and login to your Family Access Account, select the student name and click on the Food Service tab. You can also speak with the cafeteria manager of your child's school. If you need help on how to login into Skyward please call 317-789-3738.

Outstanding balances. Students with negative balances will be contacted by the Child Nutrition Department either through a low balance letter, e-mail, text or phone call to the household. If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price meals for their child.

Balances Owed. At the end of the school year, any negative balances for more than \$50.00 will be sent to a professional collection agency. The negative balance stays with the student's account until graduation or upon withdrawal. Graduating seniors must pay all charges in full. Failure to do so may result in not being allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

Refunds. For withdrawn and graduating students, a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted within sixty (60) days. An e-mail request is also acceptable. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling's account with a written request.

Unclaimed Funds. Any remaining school meal account funds must be requested within sixty (60) days of becoming inactive. If unclaimed, these funds will then become the property of Perry Township Child Nutrition Department and placed in a donation account.