

FOOD SERVICE PAYMENT POLICY – NORTHWEST COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Effective 11-21-16



I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district in the provision of meals to students and staff.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. It is the policy of Northwest Community Schools to offer and provide breakfast and lunch at school. The food service department strives to produce quality meals in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.
- B. Northwest Community Schools recognizes the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide breakfast and lunch for their children. Proper nutritional intake is essential for adequate learning to occur.
- C. The food service department utilizes a computerized Point of Sale System (PS1000) requiring **pre-payments**. Students may purchase meals when funds have deposited into their personal account. Cash payments are always accepted and students selecting ala-carte options can use either cash or positive lunch account funds at the Middle School and High School.
- D. **Account balances must be positive.** The lunch account works similar to a checking account. When a meal or item is purchased, the amount is deducted from the family lunch account. School lunch account information may be accessed online by using the PS1000 parent portal found on the district website.
- E. Families may apply for free/reduced meals anytime during the school year. Applications are provided to all families in the district prior to the start of the school year. In addition, applications are available at each building, kitchen, POS as well as the district central office and online at the district website: www.nwschools.org.
- F. **Charging Policy** – If a student forgets his/her lunch money or is unable to pay, they will be able to charge the lunch to their account under the following circumstances. A child may only charge **three** meals. Full payment is expected on the next day. If payment is not received after charging three meals, your child will no longer be able to receive a hot lunch. After charging three hot lunches, the student will be offered an alternate meal of 2 cheese sticks, graham crackers, fruit and milk. A \$.60 charge will be added to the child's account. After receiving the alternate meal for five days in a row, the building principal will be notified for further investigation and resolution.

III. PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING FAMILY OF ACCOUNT STATUS

Family balances are available on the Parent Portal and may be accessed through the district's website. Statements may be requested from the food service director via email or telephone.

A. The food service program is a pre-payment program. Families are expected to have a positive balance in the food service account at the beginning of the year and during the course of the entire school year.

B. The parent/guardian will be notified via letter from the food service office when the individual student lunch account reaches a negative balance. This notification is sent to the family address of the account on file via US Mail.

C. All students in grades 3-12 will be notified in the lunch line when their account has reached a negative balance by the cashier at the POS. K-2 students will be notified by their teacher.

D. Ala carte items may be purchased by cash at the POS but cannot be purchased using the lunch account if the account is negative.

E. Statements are also mailed at the beginning of each week to families with a negative balance in the individual student lunch account.

F. Individual lunch account privileges within families with negative account balances of \$25.00 or more may, at the discretion of food service leadership and school administration, be deactivated or suspended to prevent further unpaid purchases from occurring. Notification of this action will be sent by letter to the family address on file.

G. Families who have been notified of negative balances and who have not made payment arrangements or paid in full after 30 days of initial notice will be turned over to a collection agency designated by the district.

H. Assistance from Northwest Community School's staff may be requested by a school representative for possible neglect when the above procedures are unsuccessful.

IV. STAFF MEALS

A. Staff meals may be purchased at a price determined by the food service department. There shall be no complimentary staff meals. To be eligible for the staff meal price, portions for the individual items may not exceed those given to high school aged students.

B. Staff showing a negative balance of \$25.00 or more in their account will have their account deactivated until payment is made in full.

