

Mississinewa Community Schools
Child Nutrition Services

Meal Payment Policy

I. Forms of Payment:

There are three payment options available to use:

- Pre-paid money in Child Nutrition Services account
- Cash
- Check

All cafeterias within MCS utilize a pre-pay computerized meal payment system. All students have a district account with the Nutrition Services Department and all _district employees are eligible to have an account. Money can be deposited into this account for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk, and ala carte foods. Cash/check collection during a lunch or breakfast period slow the serving line and therefore reduce the total time students have to eat. Therefore, all cash/check payments must be made prior to breakfast or lunch. At all schools payments may be turned in to the cafeteria Manager in the morning.

There are three (3) options available for pre-payment:

- Major credit/debit card online at SendMoneyToSchool.com
- Cash: Please place in sealed envelope with child's name, classroom, and grade clearly written
- Check: Please place in sealed envelope with child's name, classroom, and grade clearly written
 - o Make checks payable to "(School Name)Cafeteria".
 - o Check must have student's full name and school name.
 - o If paying for more than one child on a single check, please note amount of money to be deposited into each child's account
 - o **NSF (non-sufficient fund) checks:** If a check is returned due to non-sufficient funds, MCS Nutrition Services will assess a \$20 fee per check. After two NSF checks are received per family per school year, checks will no longer be accepted from that family.

II. Account Balance Information

Account balance information is accessible two ways:

- 1) Utilize SendMoneyToSchool.com online payment system to monitor balance.
 - a. System can be used to monitor balance and purchase history regardless of using it to pay or not
- 2) Contact the Cafeteria Manager at the student's school.

Low Balance Notification:

- Students can clearly see balances or ask cashier at the point of sale.
- Parents can use www.SendMoneyToSchool.com to monitor balances and purchase history at no cost.
- Parents can sign up for low balance email reminders for free at www.SendMoneyToSchool.com

Positive Balance: Funds remaining in students' Nutrition Services accounts at the end of each school year will automatically be applied to the student's balance for the next school year. Only in the event that a student leaves the school district (i.e. moves, graduates, etc.), may a refund of account balance be requested. A written request must be submitted to the Child Nutrition Services Department within 30 days of the end of the school year or 30 days after the date the student leaves the district in order for the balance to be refunded.

III. Charges (purchasing without money on account)

MCS wants to ensure that every student has access to meals daily. MCS is not allowed, per USDA regulations, to incur high debt from unpaid meal charges. MCS is not required by federal or state law to provide meals to any student (except those eligible for free meals) who does not have payment either on account or in hand for a meal. MCS recognizes that there may be circumstances that may cause a student to not have money on account, so a policy has been put in place to ensure students may receive an alternative meal in these circumstances. Additionally, if families need to apply for meal assistance, they can do so at any time throughout the school year. It is very important for students, parents and schools to work together to ensure that students have money on account to purchase meals. In the event that a student does not have money to pay for a meal, the following limits are set as to how much a student can charge:

Westview Elementary and Northview Elementary:

- Equivalent current value of approximately 3 lunches and 1 breakfast, up to \$10.00 maximum
- No ala carte items may be charged
- After this limit is reached, the child will begin to receive an alternative meal which consists of a Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Fruit and Milk and will be billed at a reduced rate to cover cost. The student will continue to receive the alternate lunch until charges are paid and account is at a positive balance.

Parents will be notified of low or negative balances through the following methods:

- 1) Low balance letter emailed daily to any student with a balance below \$5.00
- 2) Negative balance letter emailed daily to any student with a negative balance/ Negative balance letter sent home daily with any elementary student with a negative balance
- 3) Alternative lunch letter sent home with elementary students the day before student will receive alternative lunch
- 4) Manager will call parent if child receives alternative lunch more than 1 day in a row

RJB Middle School and Mississinewa High School:

- NO CHARGES
 - o Alternative lunch will be provided consisting of Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Fruit and Milk and will be billed at a reduced rate to cover cost.
 - o The student will continue to receive alternate lunch until charges are paid and account is at a positive balance.

Parents will be notified of low or negative balances through the following methods:

- 1) Low balance letter emailed daily to any student with a balance below \$5.00
- 2) Alternative lunch slip given to student the day before student will receive alternative lunch
- 3) Manager will call parent if child receives alternative lunch more than 1 day in a row

Adults:

- NO CHARGES WILL BE ALLOWED

IV. Collection of funds

MCS expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their child's account and maintaining a positive cash balance. Discrepancies in purchases charged to you/your child's account must be brought to the attention of MCS Child Nutrition Services administration **within 30 days** of the date of the purchase in question in order to anticipate any type of credit or refund. Parents are encouraged to apply for meal assistance at any point in the school year if needed. MCS Child Nutrition Services will attempt to collect all money owed. In the event it cannot be collected, a third-party collection agency (and /or Child Protection Services) may be utilized.