



## **SCHOOL MEAL CHARGE POLICY**

The goal of Henry Ford Academy is to provide students with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our Food Services Department. The purpose of this policy to insure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

The intent of this policy is to establish uniform meal account procedures. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school breakfast and lunch meals only. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment, Henry Ford Academy provides this policy as a courtesy to those students in the event that they forget or lose their lunch money.

We strongly discourage meal charges, but we understand that an occasional emergency makes it necessary. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch for their child.

### **The following policy will apply regarding charges:**

- Paid students will be allowed to charge a maximum of three (3) charges before receiving an alternate meal.
- Reduced status students will be allowed to receive a breakfast for \$.30 and for \$.40 each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of six (6) meals before receiving an alternate meal.
- It is the procedure of the Child Nutrition Director to verbally remind the student that their account is low to try to avoid meal charges.
- Free status students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. A la carte purchases must be prepaid.
- Ala-carte items may not be charged at any time.
- Students that obtain a regular meal and cannot pay for the meal because of outstanding charges will be discreetly offered an alternate meal.
- Students that apply for the free/reduced meal program are responsible for the cost of their meals until the application has been processed.
- USDA is aware that schools may not make meals available to children who do not pay for their meals because of prior issues with re-payment. Schools are not required to provide meals to non-paying full price or reduced-price students. However, Henry Ford Academy will provide an alternate meal to any student that has outstanding charges. If the child's account has a negative balance or if the student does not have money to pay for the lunch, the student will be provided an alternate meal. This will be provided to the student at no charge.

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year.
- Unclaimed funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the Property of the Henry Ford Academy Food Service Program.
- Parents/Guardians pay for meals in advance via <https://schoolpaymentportal.com> or with a check payable to Henry Ford Academy. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a student will be carried over to the next school year.
- Refunds for withdrawn, and graduating students; a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An email 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.

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