

**Sutton Public Schools**  
**Sutton, Massachusetts**  
01590



### **Sutton Public Schools' Meal Charging Procedure**

The Sutton Public School Food Service and Nutrition Program takes pride in serving nutritious meals daily to our students. We are firm believers that hungry students cannot learn. Under no circumstance do we want a child to go without breakfast or lunch. We understand that parents are busy and may occasionally forget to pack a lunch or send in money. However, the number of students who owe our program for milk, breakfasts, lunches, and a la carte items is significant. As you know, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide students with lunch or a means to pay for meals.

Set forth below are the procedures for charging meals with the Sutton Public Schools' Food Service & Nutrition Program. In order to continue providing nutritious yet enticing meals to our students, we must follow policies and procedures set in place through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). The Sutton Public Schools' Food Service & Nutrition Program is a self-sustaining program, which relies on funds received from the NSLP and SBP in return for selling reimbursable meals. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) places a liability on the district; "at the end of each fiscal year the School Food Service Authorities (SFA's) must be made whole for any outstanding debt remaining at the end of each school year". To minimize the impact the outstanding debt (due to meal charges) may have on the district, the following procedures will be implemented. The goals are to maintain the financial stability of the program, continue to provide nutritious meals to students, encourage parents to take responsibility for their student's meal activity, and to treat all students in a consistent and respectful manner.

#### **Payment Options:**

All students are expected to pay for their meals, in full, at the time of sale. Preferably, meals will be pre-paid in advance by cash, check or credit/debit (through our online payment program at MySchoolBucks.com). If meals are not pre-paid, they must be paid for at the time of sale.

#### **Items Available for Purchase:**

At the Simonian Center level, students are allowed to purchase a breakfast, lunch, or single milks using their account funds.

At the Elementary level, students are allowed to purchase a breakfast, lunch, single milks, 8 oz. waters (lunch only), 100% juice boxes (lunch only), ice cream (Wednesdays only, cash only) and double entrees using their account funds.

At the Middle School and High School levels, students are allowed to purchase a breakfast, lunch, double entrees, single milks, ice cream, snacks, 16 oz. and 24 oz. waters, 100% juices, and a variety of a la carte items using their account funds.

### **Meal Charging Procedures:**

#### **1) Students Receiving Free/Reduced Price Meal Benefits**

- a) Students who are eligible to receive free meals may receive one complete breakfast and one complete lunch per day. **In order to receive the free meal, students must take all required meal components, which must include one serving of fruit and/or vegetable.** If a student reaches the point of sale without all required components, he or she will be prompted to return to the service line to take the necessary meal component. If a student refuses to take the missing component, the student will be charged \$3.35 ("entrée only") for the incomplete meal. Double entrees, a la carte items, single milks/waters, and snacks can only be purchased if the student has funds in his or her account or presents payment at the point of sale.
- b) Reduced price breakfast and lunch cost \$0.30 and \$0.40 respectively. In order to receive the reduced price meal, **students must take all required meal components, which must include one serving of fruit and/or vegetable.** If a student reaches the point of sale without all required components, he or she will be prompted to return to the service line to take the necessary meal component. If a student refuses to take the missing component, the student will be charged \$3.35 ("entrée only") for their incomplete meal. Double entrees, a la carte items, single milks/waters and snacks can only be purchased if the student has funds in his or her account or presents payment at the point of sales. If the student does not have adequate funds to purchase the meal at the point of purchase, the student's account will be charged for the full cost of that meal. He or she will be notified at the point of purchase that the account requires additional funds.

#### **2) All Other Students**

- a) At the Simonian Center level, all meal components are included at the point of service; therefore, all meals served here are reimbursable/complete. At the elementary, middle and high school levels, students may opt to decline some of the food items. However, **students must still take a full serving of fruit and/or vegetable.** The 5 meal components include: milk, meat/meat-alternate, fruit, vegetable and grains. Students **must** select 3 of the aforementioned meal components (**one of which must be a serving of fruit or a serving of vegetable for the meal**) to be considered complete/reimbursable at the point of purchase. If a student reaches the point of sale without all required components, he or she will be prompted to return to the service line to take the necessary meal component. If a student refuses to take the missing component, he or she will be charged \$3.35 for his or her incomplete meal.

### 3) Charging/Inadequate Funds

#### a) Enrolled Students:

- Students who do not have adequate funds in their accounts will be allowed to charge one breakfast and one lunch per day. However, students who owe more than \$15.00 (and need lunch but do not have money), will only be offered a cheese sandwich, a milk, and a fruit. The cost to the student for this substitute meal will be \$1.50, and will be added to the student's balance. The student will only be offered this alternate lunch until the overdue account is paid in full.
- No student will be denied a reimbursable meal unless parent/guardian documentation is currently on file
- The cost of these meals will be charged to the student's account
- The student will be notified at the point of sale that his or her account has a negative balance
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with negative balances will be notified on a weekly basis through an automated email
- Students will not be allowed to charge/purchase double entrees, a la carte items and/or snacks to their account if they have a negative balance
- Students will not be allowed to make cash purchases for snack items if they have a negative balance. (This means that all students will enter in their student ID before purchasing snack items.) If a student comes to the point of sale with an extra meal, a la carte item and/or snack item and has a negative balance, he or she will be informed of the situation and will not be allowed to continue with the purchase.
  - i) Negative balances exceeding \$50.00: The School's principal shall be notified and will place a personal phone call to the parent(s)/guardian(s) to arrange for a payment plan for the outstanding balance.
  - ii) Negative balances exceeding \$100.00: The Superintendent shall be notified and will place a personal phone call to the parent(s)/guardian(s) to inquire whether or not extenuating circumstances are a factor to the overdue account. Payment for unpaid lunch accounts will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.
  - iii) Limitations/Blocking Charges: If a parent/guardian wishes to limit their student's spending, a written letter (email is acceptable) must be provided to the Director of Food Services stating exactly what is/is not allowed. This

note will be transferred to the students account and will appear on the cashier's screen when the student enters his or her ID number. Cashiers will attempt to enforce these limits, but it is ultimately up to the parent/guardian to discuss this matter with the student. The parent/guardian must contact the Director of Food Services & Nutrition if they wish to remove the note from the student's account.

- b) Graduating Students (5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students): Students who are scheduled to graduate 5th, 8th or 12th grade, must reconcile all negative debts prior to their graduation date in order to participate in graduation ceremonies.
- c) Staff: All staff members are expected to pay for all food purchases at the time of sale. Staff members will no longer be able to make any purchases, including breakfast, lunch, snack, or drink items once his or her account reaches a negative balance of twenty (-\$20) dollars. Food items will only be available for purchase once the overdue balance is paid in full.

#### 4) **Account Refunds**

- a) Withdrawn Students: Students who are withdrawing from the district, may request a refund of any money remaining in their account via a written request/email/phone call to Director of Food Services & Nutrition from their parent/guardian. Requests must be made within 6 months of the student's withdrawal date. After the 6 months period, any money remaining will become the property of the Sutton Public School Food Service Department.
- b) Graduating Students: Students who are graduating at the end of the school year may request a refund via a written request/email/phone call to Director of Food Services & Nutrition from their parent/guardian. Funds may also be transferred to a sibling's account, within the same district, with a written request to the Director of Food Services & Nutrition.
- c) Transferring Funds between Siblings: Funds can easily be transferred between siblings within the same school district. Funds are unable to be transferred between students at different districts (i.e., we cannot transfer funds from a student at Sutton High School to a sibling at BVT). To request a transfer, please contact the Director of Food Services & Nutrition via email or phone.
- d) Inquiring about Transactions/Account Usage: Parent(s)/guardian(s) are strongly encouraged to create an account for their student(s) on MySchoolBucks.com. This allows access to transaction and payment history, as well as offers the ability to set up low balance reminders and automatic withdrawals. If you suspect an error with your student's account, you must contact the Director of Food Services & Nutrition within 1 week of the transaction. Suspected errors cannot be revised if they are not brought to the Director's attention within this one week period. Transaction and payment history can be provided by contacting the Director via email or phone.