



MATER LAKES ACADEMY

Home of the Bears

Meal Charge Policy 2022-2023

The goal of our food service program is to provide student with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden our Food Service Department. The intent of this policy is to establish uniform meal account procedures because we understand that students may periodically forget or lose lunch money. We encourage parent/guardian responsibility of meal payments and promote self-responsibility of the student while treating all student with dignity.

The Principal may allow the students to pay at a later date. In these cases, the principal assumes the responsibility for the following:

- Authorizing the family or student to make a deferred payment
- Collecting monies due

Payment for a reimbursable meal is due as the student is served. If payment is not received once a reimbursable meal is served, then payment issues will be resolved through the school directly with the student and their parent/guardian(s).

Full Pay Students will pay for meals at the published standard rate each day. Student may accrue a negative balance of up to three meals on their food service account. Once a student has charged those three meals, no a la carte item will be sold to the student, and the student may be offered an alternate reimbursable meal which will be charged to the student's meal account at the standard rate.

Reduced Meal Benefit Reduced status students will be allowed to receive a FREE breakfast and lunch for \$.40 each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of six (6) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those six meals, no a la carte item will be sold to the student, and the student may be offered an alternate reimbursable meal which will be charged to the student's meal account at the standard rate.

Free Meal Benefit - Free status students will be allowed to receive one free breakfast and one free lunch each day. A la carte purchases must be prepaid.

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. Payment for meals can be made in advance, further details are available on the school's website. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a student may

be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year.

All school cafeterias have computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student.

Refunds for withdrawn, and graduating students; a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. 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 must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the School's Food Service Program.

Balances Owed will be pursued privately with families. Home contact will be made to households of students with negative balances to address the unpaid meal charges. A variety of strategies for collecting debts will be used, including sending requests to parents for repayment via phone, email and letters. The food service department will work with school officials to enforce repayment.

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 is suspected, parents and families will be highly encouraged & assisted to apply for free or reduced priced meals for their child.

Families may apply (or reapply) for free or reduced price meals at any time during the school year.