

NUTRITION SERVICES DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES: Payment Options, Charging, Courtesy Meals & Notifications to Parent/Guardian

CONTACT MSD FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments:

Meridian School District
Food & Nutrition Services

Nutrition Office Phone: 360-318-2360 | Fax: 360-398-8131

Food & Nutrition Services Manager, Maria Doyle | mdoyle@meridian.wednet.edu

Please visit: www.meridian.wednet.edu "Food Service" under departments.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

In order to have your student's food service account in good standing you may provide payment the following ways:

Check or Cash. We accept personal checks or cash. However, we recommend using checks as this is a safer method of sending money to school with your child. We do not accept Canadian money or any other foreign currency. Make a check payable to "Meridian School District or MSDFS." We can't accept checks written in gel pens or pencil. *Elementary Only: If you send cash, please put it in a sealed baggie/envelope clearly labeled with student's first and last name. If you want your child to receive change, please hand-write a note enclosed with the money, otherwise the full amount will be deposited onto the student's account.*

Direct Deposit Online. www.MyMealtime.com system allows you to conveniently make an electronic deposit through an automated service. Deposits are updated every five minutes online. You will need to know your student's ID number (this # is assigned to each student) to set this up. **The system requires seven digits, so please put a leading 0 (zero) in front of the six digit ID.** There is no charge to view purchases, receive email notifications, or check balances. There is a small 4.9% transaction fee to make an online payment. All student balances follow your student into the next school year at any Meridian School District.

We encourage every household to sign up for **Low Balance Parent Email Notifications:** You may log on to your profile (www.MyMealtime.com) at any time (this is free to access) and review your student's account balances and/or purchases.

Setting up email notifications: When you are logged into MyMealtime.com, you can go to "My Profile" and set up a low balance email notification. For instance, if you wanted to know when the balance falls below \$5.00, you can enter that dollar amount, and you will receive an email letting you know when the balance falls to that level. You can choose any low balance dollar amount you wish.

Email notifications: Meridian School District has a low balance notification that is e-mailed to parents on Monday, Wednesday & Fridays. If you would like receive this notification please send your e-mail address to the school office or call the school office and ask to have it entered into your skyward account.

NO CHARGING AND LOW BALANCES

All grade levels: Students who intend to buy food through the school meals program must pay in advance or pay as they go to purchase items. **No credit will be extended.**

A courtesy meal is offered to any student that does not have sufficient funds to cover the expense of the meal.

Charging Exceptions:

- **If our point of sale system is down, we allow ALL students to charge.** There is no way of knowing a student's balance. The student will be served the meal and charged accordingly. We do not allow a la carte items to be charged at any time.

COURTESY MEALS

What is a Courtesy Meal?

A courtesy meal is offered to a student, at no charge, if a student does not have sufficient funds on their account. This meal is offered to prevent any student from going without a meal. Any student can deny a courtesy meal offered to them.

- **Courtesy Breakfast:** Cereal bowl and white milk and juice
- **Courtesy Lunch:** Crackers, cheese stick, milk and fruit.

We encourage families to cover the expense of school meals and/or we can assist any family seeking financial support through the Federal Child Nutrition Program. If you think you may qualify for free or reduced price meals, please call our office at 360-318-2360. We can answer your questions or mail an application to your home. Every courtesy meal provided to a student is a direct food cost to our department. For that reason we would like to limit the number of courtesy meals provided to any given student during a school year.

NOTIFICATIONS TO FAMILIES | LOW BALANCES & SERVED COURTESY MEALS

- **Low Balance:** Households are notified of any low balances with an automated e-mail or slip sent home with student. The e-mail or slip will state the student's name and low balance amount. We encourage every household to sign up for low balance email notifications at www.mymealtime.com. Meridian School District has a low balance notification that is e-mailed to parents on Monday, Wednesday & Fridays. If you would like receive this notification please send your e-mail address to the school office or call the school office and ask to have it entered into your skyward account.

- **All grade levels:**

After a courtesy meal have been served to a student during the current year, our Nutrition Office will call home to inform/remind the household and will continue with follow-up if needed.

INFORMATION REGARDING FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS

If you think you might qualify under federal guidelines, please complete a current application. Applications are available at each school or you can access a copy online at our department website at www.meridian.wednet.edu "Food Service" under departments.

All information provided is kept confidential.

Eligible students may receive free or reduced-priced meals. Applications are accepted all year long. According to government guidelines our office has 10 working days to process an application once received by food services. **Turning in an application does not automatically approve a child for free or reduced meals.** A family will be notified by mail of their status or they can call the Nutrition Office to check the status of their application. We do our best to approve them as soon as they are received. **Until officially approved by the child nutrition office the family is responsible for any student food purchases accrued.**

To qualify for these programs a guardian must fill out an application **every** school year and submit it to the Food & Nutrition Office. Eligible students are based on total household income levels, household members, and/or federal assistance program qualifications (i.e. TANF, FDPIR, and BASIC FOOD). **Please note:** If you have a child approved for free or reduced meals, any a la carte purchases (i.e. extra milk, bottled water or extra slice pizza) will need to be paid for.

REQUESTING A REFUND

You may request a refund at any point during the school year. Contact the Nutrition Office at 360-318-2360. A check will be mailed to your home 2-4 weeks after the request has been made.

REPAYING AN NSF CHECK (Non-Sufficient Funds)

We only accept cash or online deposit to repay any NSF check returned by the bank. Until it has been paid we can no longer accept checks from the household. A household is responsible for any fees charged by the bank for the NSF check.