

ZUMBROTA-MAZEPPA DISTRICT LUNCH ACCOUNT POLICY

Approved 8/22/2016

The School Board's policy regarding lunch account balances effective for the 2016-2017 school year is as follows:

A Point of Sale (POS) software system is used for the school lunch program. Please note the following important information:

- Each student will have his/her own individual Student Account and will have an individual account number (please memorize).
- Check and cash deposits can be received at the individual student's school and with the District Food Service Office. Checks should be made payable to the Zumbrota-Mazeppa School District.
- Separate checks should be written for students at separate schools. To insure credit to the proper account, the student's full name should be written on the check on the memo line. The minimum deposit must be \$20.
- If sending cash with a student, place in a sealed envelope, along with the student's name and lunch account number. *We are not responsible for lost, unidentified, or stolen cash. The minimum deposit must be \$20.*
- If money needs to be transferred from one sibling's account to another, then a note or phone call from home is needed. The only exception will be if a student's sibling has money that can be transferred in order to avoid receiving an alternative meal (see below).
- Students must have money deposited in their lunch account in order to purchase extra entrees or extra milk, regardless of eligibility status (paid, free, or reduced). This also applied to ala carte and the monthly chef demonstration meals.
- We cannot make change for cash at the schools so please utilize the lunch account for all purchases.

The policy will be enforced with high school and middle school students as follows:

- The lunch room computer will give the cashier a "low balance" warning whenever a student's individual account is \$20 or below. At this point, there will be an email generated and sent to the parent/guardian.
 - Day 1: Students are told the account balance is low and they need to bring money by the Point of Sale person or the Food Service Director.
 - Day 2: Students are told the account balance is low and they need to bring money. A letter or email will be sent to the parents/guardian.
 - Day 3: If the student does not bring money and the cashier still gets the "low balance" message, a verbal will be given to the student and a letter/email will be given to the parent/guardian again. Students will not be able to purchase ala carte items if there is not sufficient funds available in the student account. This will happen when the account reaches \$0.
 - Day 4: Students with an account that is too low to make a purchase will be offered an "alternative meal" (see below). This will happen at \$-5.00.
- Low balance statements are tracked daily. The statement will be given to advisory teachers to give the student directly or there will be emails sent to the household. If a negative balance persists, there will be a phone call to the home, followed by a letter from the Superintendent.
- Parents and/or students can check their account balance by calling the Food Service Office at 507-732-1417 or by creating a login through the school district in the Infinite Campus Portal to view the paperless version of the account as well.

The policy will be enforced with elementary and primary school students as follows:

- The lunchroom computer will give the cashier a "low balance" warning whenever a student's individual account is at \$20 or below.
 - Day 1: Students are told the account balance is low and they need to bring money.
 - Day 2: If the student does not bring money and the cashier still gets the "low balance" message, student is told the account balance is low and they need to bring money.
 - Day 3: If the student does not bring money and the cashier still gets the "low balance" message, the student is told the account balance is low and they need to bring money. When the account reaches \$0, a statement of account will go home with the student.
 - Day 4: If the account balance is too low and the negative balance persists, the student is offered an "alternative meal" (see below).

- Statements for elementary students with a low or zero balance will be sent home as needed. Parents should check their student's backpack for lunch account statements. Please be aware that there will also be emailed reminders sent to the household.
- If there is a persistent negative balance, a letter will be sent from the Superintendent's Office.
- Parents/guardians can check their account balance by calling the Food Service Office at 507-732-1417 or by creating a login through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal to view the paperless version of the lunch account.

Assistance from county social services may be requested from the school social worker for possible educational neglect when the above procedures are unsuccessful.

Alternative Meal:

Paid students with a balance that is too low to purchase the regular lunch meal cannot eat the regular meal until money is put into their lunch account. They will be offered an alternative meal of a cheese sandwich, fruit & veggie bar, and milk. The student will have the opportunity to call home during the lunch period to request to have money added to their account. The alternative meal will be the offered meal until there is a sufficient lunch account balance. Students eligible for free or reduced price meals will be allowed to receive the regular meal, but must have money in their account to purchase extra entrees or extra milk. Payment arrangements can be made with the district, if needed.

After thirty (30) days of a negative balance, a follow up call to county social services will be made. County social services are required to investigate claims of "educational neglect" when contacted by a school district. It is the position of the Zumbrota-Mazeppa School District that families that can afford to make payments, yet are refusing to provide their child with basic needs such as a school lunch, are engaging in "educational neglect".

Outside Food and Beverage Policy:

The district does not allow the delivery of food or beverages from outside vendors or fast food establishments for a student's breakfast or lunch meal. All meals are to be provided by the district's food service or a prepared meal from home may be sent with your student. Only approved soda can be purchased in the cafeteria by 9th through 12th grade students.

Free and Reduced Benefits Program:

All families interested in applying for financial benefits for the lunch and breakfast program for school year 2016-2017 must obtain an application for free and reduced benefits. **A NEW APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETED EACH SCHOOL YEAR. Please make every effort to have the application filled out and returned to the district office prior to the start of the 2016-2017 school year.**

If you are currently receiving benefits and expect to be eligible for the upcoming year, you must reapply. If you do not, the benefit grace period will run out and your student(s) will automatically revert to paid status. This will happen 30 days after the start of the current school year. You will be responsible for the incurred expenses, even if you become eligible again at a later point during the school year.

Please plan accordingly and look for the application in your school welcome packet in the first week of August. The completed forms can be mailed to the District Office at 343 Third Avenue NE, Mazeppa, MN 55956, or dropped off at the same location. You may also stop at the District Food Service office in Zumbrota to drop off the application.

Additional applications will be available in the following locations:

- School District Office
- The Offices of the Middle/High School, Elementary School, and Primary School
- District Food Service Office
- On the ZM Schools' web page

Thank you for helping Lunchtime Solutions, Inc. operate a healthy and outstanding food service program for Zumbrota-Mazeppa Schools. Please direct all questions to the Zumbrota-Mazeppa District Office at 507-732-1400.