

Meal Charge Policy

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.

All students are assigned an active meal account with a Lunch ID# number. Students who qualify for free/reduced meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal. Students who have money on account to pay for a full price meal at the time of service must be provided a meal.

Parents are encouraged to add payment to student accounts, in advance, for purchases of full or reduced price meals and a la carte items. Parents can add funds to their student's meal account online through PowerSchool or at the school office with check or money order, made payable to AOB/Child Nutrition office (no cash is accepted). Any payment sent to the school must be in a sealed envelope with the student's name, grade and "lunch money" written on it. A la carte items **can only be purchased** if the student account has a positive balance to cover the items. **No money will be accepted in the line.** Any money collected from the student will be applied to their meal account. If the account has a negative balance, the payment will be used to repay unpaid meal charge debt. If the account has a positive balance, the payment will be applied as a credit for future use. Students who pay full price for meals and do not have money in their account to cover the cost of a meal at the time of service will be permitted to charge a meal. However, these students will be **denied permission to charge a la carte or "extra" items, such as milk or additional entrée**

When adding payments to a student's account, parents will be permitted to limit the amount of funds (for meals or a la carte items) that a student may use daily by emailing the request to abain@archbalt.org.

A meal account balance remains with the student until the student is no longer enrolled in the school district. Students with unused credit in their accounts at the point of disenrollment or graduation can request a refund in the amount of the credit by emailing abain@archbalt.org.

The Child Nutrition Program is encouraged to provide a reimbursable meal to a student with unpaid meal charges **unless**: The student's parent or guardian has specifically provided written direction to the Child Nutrition Office (abain@archbalt.org) to withhold a meal from the student. **IMPORTANT: If the meal account is turned off the student will not be able to purchase any items from the cafeteria! This includes meals and a la carte items!**

Parents will be notified of a low (under \$10) or negative balance on a student account, privately by: weekly notices sent home by the Food Service Manager/School and auto-call, text and/or email reminders.

Notification of chronic negative balances greater than \$50 on a student account will receive direct mail notification, email or phone call from the Child Nutrition Office and/or School Office.

Households with questions, needing assistance or requesting a detailed meal statement may contact the Food Service Manager at the school or the Child Nutrition Office at: abain@archbalt.org

If payment made by check is returned for non-payment, the amount paid will be removed from the students account and the parent will be charged a \$30 fee. A letter will be sent to the parent at the address on file and a copy emailed to the principal and food service manager. No checks will be accepted until the returned check is resolved. If payment made online is returned for non-payment, the amount paid will be removed from the students account. Note: This may cause a negative account balance.

If there is unpaid meal charges at the end of the school year, the Child Nutrition office will advise the principal/school Office of anyone in arrears and request that reports cards are held until payment is received. If the family ignores the request for payment anything not paid during the school year becomes the responsibility of the school.

Outstanding balances do not "go away". The Child Nutrition Office will continue collection procedures until all balances are paid.

If you think you may be eligible for free or reduced meals; you can complete a meal benefit application online through your meal account or request a hard copy by emailing abain@archbalt.org.