



HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

2354 BRODHEAD ROAD
ALIQUIPPA, PENNSYLVANIA 15001-4206

724-375-6691 Central Office

MICHELLE M. MILLER, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT

JENNIFER CONRAD
BUSINESS MANAGER

CAFETERIA MEAL CHARGE POLICY

(Effective August 1, 2020)

All students that attend the Hopewell Area School District are provided the opportunity to purchase breakfast and lunch at the school cafeteria in accordance with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

- No student that requests a meal will be denied a reimbursable meal, unless the student's parent/guardian has provided written permission to withhold a school lunch. Ala carte items (i.e. snacks, alternate beverages, second meals) are not part of the main lunch and can only be purchased with positive lunch accounts funds or cash.
- Parents/Guardians are solely responsible for providing their children with money for breakfast and/or lunch.
- The District utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system in each of its cafeterias. Each student in the school is given an individual account with a unique number that remains with a student throughout his/her school years. Parents/Guardians are responsible for all purchases made on their child's account.
- A National School Lunch Program Free/Reduced Meal application shall be sent home at the start of each school year. An application is also available throughout the year on our District website. Parent/Guardians can also apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us. A new application must be submitted by the parent/guardian every year.
- Students approved for the free/reduced lunch program will receive one (1) free/reduced breakfast and one (1) free/reduced lunch per day. Additional lunches, breakfasts or milk must be purchased at the full price. Ala carte items and milk are not covered under the free and reduced program.
- Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to deposit money in their child's cafeteria account so that adequate funds are readily available to purchase school breakfast and lunch. Parents/Guardians can deposit money by sending a check or cash with their child to school. Parents/Guardians may also deposit online by using Board-approved software. A convenience fee may apply for using this service which is imposed by the online service, not the District. Negative balances will be satisfied first from any deposits made and the leftover will be available on the account.
- If checks are returned due to insufficient funds (NSF), the check amount will be deducted from the student's lunch account. In addition, all applicable bank fees will also be charged to the student's account. A letter requesting repayment of the

check value plus applicable fees will be mailed to the parent/guardian. After two (2) recorded NSF transactions per school year, the District will no longer accept payment by check; payment may only be made by cash or money order.

- Direct communications regarding negative balances will be made to the parent/guardian only. Students may deliver communications in letter form addressed to the parent/guardian.
- School staff may communicate low or negative balances owed by a student for school meals to a student in grades nine (9) through twelve (12); such communication shall be made to the individual student in a discreet manner.
- Students who owe money or do not have money for a school meal will not be publicly identified, stigmatized or be required to do chores or work. No student will be required to discard a school meal after it has been served. If a student's account is at a negative balance, non-meal food items such as snacks or alternate beverages other than milk (ala carte items) will not be allowed and will be removed from their purchase choices.
- When a negative balance of five dollars (\$5.00) or greater is reached, a sealed letter/notice will be sent to the parent/guardian through USPS or through the student. Automated phone calls will also occur on a weekly basis to the parent/guardian. The letter will indicate that the negative amount is due or payment arrangements must to be made within ten (10) business days. At this time, the parent/guardian will also be provided another application for free/reduced-price school meal benefits under the federal school meal programs.
- Students with negative account balances greater than fifty dollars (\$50.00) will have a certified letter sent to their parent/guardian from the Business Office indicating that if payment is not made within fourteen (14) days, the account may be turned over to the District Magistrate's Office or a collection agency. Any further costs incurred by this section will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Once a balance is turned over to a collection agency or Magistrate's Office, the student account will be reset to zero (\$0). Any deposits made to the student account after resetting the balance to zero will not go against the delinquent amount owed but will go towards future purchases. Payments made on delinquent accounts turned over to collections must be made through the collection agency or Magistrate, not to the District. Accounts can be turned over to collections or the Magistrate's Office more than once during a school year if the negative balance reaches fifty dollars (\$50) again without payment within fourteen (14) days even if the account has already been reset to zero (\$0) and previously sent to a collection agency or Magistrate's Office.
- If a student has a negative account balance at the end of any grading period, the School District will not release a report card, online grade reports, or high school transcripts until the negative balance is paid. Upon withdrawing from the District, students must bring their account to zero (0) balance; any refund will be sent to the parent/guardian.
- If a student has a negative account balance the student will not be permitted to purchase tickets to social events or parking permits.

- If a student has a negative account balance upon graduation, the student will not be authorized to attend the commencement ceremony and a diploma will not be issued to the student until the negative balance is paid.
- If a student has a negative account balance at the time of their transfer to another school district, the School District will not provide student academic grade reports and transcripts to the receiving school district, unless required by law, until the negative balance is paid. The School District is required by law to transfer a student's disciplinary record to the receiving school district.
- Negative account balances at the end of the school year will be transferred over to the following school year.
- The District may accept gifts or donations to directly benefit students with negative meal account balances. The gift or donation should be designated for an individual student's account by the donor. If the gift or donation is not designated for an individual student, the donation will benefit delinquent accounts as a whole.
- Questions related to this policy or to make payment arrangements should be directed to (724) 375-6863.