

## Northeast Metro Regional Vocational School Cafeteria Lunch Policy

Northeast Metro Regional Vocational School (NMRVS) prepares and offers breakfast and lunch daily according to the guidelines of the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP). NMRVS is currently on the Community Eligibility Program (CEP). The CEP Program has the benefit that all students receive FREE breakfast and lunch.. Though everyone is free, a second breakfast is available for \$1.50 and a second lunch is \$3.00. A la carte items are also available ranging in price from \$.50 to \$2.00. The cost for adults is \$1.75 for breakfast and \$3.75 for lunch. Alternatively, students may bring a bag lunch from home. Soda and caffeinated beverages are not allowed in the lunchroom per the District's Wellness Policy. Milk may be purchased for \$0.75 or is included with lunch. New USDA regulations imposed upon the NSLP require that each student take a fruit and/or a vegetable with their meal, control portion sizes, and dictate the cost of a school lunch.

Students will enter their ID # when purchasing lunch. Our system will then pull up the students' picture and name. They will be rung through and continue to the Cafeteria. Parents/Guardians may deposit money into their child's account at any time in the cafeteria by cash and/or check, Money can also be added to your students account by logging into my **[www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com)**. Positive lunch balances automatically follow the student, rolling over at the end of each school year.

If a student forgot their money, they are allowed to borrow and owe. If a student borrows any lunches, Parents/Guardians are required to pay it back before the end of the school year, when the student reaches 3 borrowed meals, and they do **NOT have** money for their lunch, a warning letter is sent and a call may be made to the Parent/Guardian. A lunch is still provided and added to their account.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Northeast Regional Office, has issued the following guidance addressing students charging meals and the use of the school food service account to cover the cost of these charged meals:

"The frequency of schools allowing full and reduced price students who do not have lunch money to charge a meal has increased significantly in recent months. Often the moneys due from these students are never paid leaving the school food service program with an uncollectable debt.

The Office of Management and Budget's Circular A-87, 'Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments', Attachment B, Item 7, Bad Debt covers these situations. This directive states that bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs, are unallowable.

What this means is that funds from the non-profit school food service account cannot be used to cover the cost of charged meals that have not been paid.

There is also confusion as to whether schools/districts are required to provide meals to non-paying full or reduced price students as well as what elements need to be included in a charging policy. FNS guidance in this area is outdated and we have asked our National Office to issue revised guidance that would answer these questions.

In the interim, schools/districts may opt to provide an alternate meal such as a cheese or peanut butter sandwich at no charge to the student. Since the student is not being offered the required menu items, this type of meal is not reimbursable and the full cost must be borne by the school/district using funds that do not come from the school food service account. Schools/districts may also choose to serve a reimbursable meal to non-paying students so that some funds are received to offset food and labor costs. Schools/districts that are providing meals to non-paying students should establish a written policy on the charging of school meals and make this widely available to parents, guardians, and students.”

Families undergoing severe financial hardship may obtain an application for free and reduced priced meals from their building guidance office or from the café office.

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