

## **Point of Sale System:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to continue to improve the services we provide for parents and students in the District, we use a computerized, Point-of-Sale (POS) system in your school cafeteria called Horizon.

The Point of Sale (POS) system helps improve the efficiency of the serving lines, allowing students more time to enjoy their meal. This system also provides a convenient and secure way for parents to pre-pay for their children's meals.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **WHAT IS POINT OF SALE?**

Point of Sale is a system that will allow the cafeteria to meet certain federal guidelines regarding menu planning. It is also used to eliminate the need for cash on a daily basis thereby speeding up meal service.

#### **DO I HAVE CONTROL OVER THE AMOUNT SPENT IN THE CAFETERIA?**

Parents predetermine whether a child can use the money/account for lunch (Meal) only or for lunch and ala carte purchases (general). Ala carte purchases can be milk, snacks, ice cream, etc, the parent determines if the money is put in meal or a general account. An account balance and record of money submitted and spent can be obtained easily on mealpayplus. For more information go to:

<http://www.mealpayplus.com>

#### **COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT THE SYSTEM IS?**

The system is a computerized Point-of-Sale system with a pre-payment option. An account is set up for each student who is given a six digit personal identification number (PIN) to access this account or use finger imaging at the elementary. It is a debit or pre-paid system, not a credit system. Parents can pre-pay in any amount to their child's account. As the student purchases meals and/or snacks, their account is debited.

#### **CAN YOU GIVE US A BETTER IDEA OF EXACTLY HOW THIS SYSEM WORKS?**

Each child in the school will have a meal account that is accessed with finger imaging at the elementary or in the secondary put their six digit code in a pin pad. The student's account is divided into two options: a Meal Account (money reserved for meals only) and a General Account (money that can be used for meals and/or snack items). Parents can pre-pay in any amount to one or both of these accounts. We can also limit the daily dollar value of snacks allowed, based on the daily dollar limit that you specify.

As the student purchases meals and/or snacks, their account is debited. If the student's balance gets low, a message will alert the cashier and she will tell the student to tell their parents to replenish the account. (In the Elementary and Middle schools, parents and/or guardians will receive a Skylert phone call. In the High School, an email Skylert message is sent home.)

There is a built in security system in that the student's photo also appears on the screen when they enter their PIN. This way the cashier can verify the person using the account at that moment. Also, if the PIN has already been used during that meal period for a meal, the cashier will be alerted that a meal has already been taken.

## **WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS SYSTEM?**

The major advantage for the parents is that they can deposit money in their child's account, in any amount, ahead of time and not have to be concerned with the hassle of coming up with the correct change each morning. They can also rest assured that the money they send to the cafeteria is used only for purchasing food. A student does not have to have any cash with them to enjoy all the selections in the lunch program; they just need a balance in their debit account. The account is only debited when meals and/or snack food items are purchased. Remaining balances will be carried forward to the following year.

For the students, the cafeteria line moves faster if all the meals are prepaid. This gives the students more time to enjoy their meal.

## **CAN MY CHILD CHARGE LUNCH?**

If your child's account falls into a negative balance, we will allow them to charge four (4) lunches at the elementary centers and two (2) lunches at the Middle School. However, we will not allow snack items to be charged to an account at the elementary and Middle School. High School students may go to the office to borrow money after one (1) charge and Middle School after two (2) charges.

## **WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES?**

If your child has a food allergy or milk allergy, you may indicate that on the prepayment envelope. We would like to put that in the system so that the cashier may be alerted discretely when your child goes through the line.

## **IS THERE A LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF MONEY I CAN PUT IN THE ACCOUNT?**

There is no set limit to the amount of money that can be placed in the account. If you designate that the child may use the account for lunch and ala carte purchases, then they will be able to buy milk or ice cream, soft pretzels, etc. when they do not purchase lunch or in addition to when they do purchase lunch. The system will accept any amount that you feel is appropriate.

## **HOW WILL THIS SYSTEM WORK WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?**

Since all students have to enter their PIN when receiving a meal, there is no way that a student can be identified as receiving a free or reduced price meal.

For more information please call Food Service Office at 610-469-5127 or 610-469-5701. If no one is available, please leave a message stating when and where you can be reached and the Food Service Office will return your call.

## **WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POINT OF SALE?**

You have the option of paying cash on the serving line each day. However, the system and the lunch line moves much quicker when each student has an account.

## **Advantages of Using the Point of Sale System**

### **Time Saving For Parents and Students**

Prepaid accounts for students means that parents can deposit money in their child's account, in any amount, ahead of time and not have to be concerned with the hassle of coming up with the correct change each morning. We will notify children in the serving line when their balance becomes low. You may also sign up for MealPay.com to view your child's account balance.

When a student's account is prepaid you can be sure that the student is using that money for nutritious meals, served only in the cafeteria.

The cafeteria line moves faster for the students if all the meals are prepaid. This gives the students more time to enjoy their meals.

Any amount you send will be credited to your child's account. Your prepayment does not have to be a multiple of the meal price. You will only be charged for the meals and snacks your child purchases.

Students can still pay cash in the line; however, exchange of cash will slow down the cafeteria line.

### **Convenient & Saves Money**

In addition to meals, a la carte milk and snacks can be purchased using this system. The student's account is divided into two options: a Meal Account (money reserved for meals only) and a General Account (money that can be used for meals and/or snack items). We can limit the daily dollar value of snacks allowed, based on the daily dollar limit that you specify you can do this by calling the manager at your child's school or writing on the envelope with your child's payment.

When sending in prepayment money, please include the child's PIN on the envelope or check, and indicate how much of the money should go into the student's Meal Account and how much should go into the student's General Account. If the money is to be divided between two or more students, please put this in writing and indicate how much is to be allocated for each child.

We strongly encourage parents to prepay using checks, rather than cash. Your checks should be made payable to ("Owen J. Roberts Foodservice"). Please put in an envelope with your child's full name and Café under the name. You may pay by having your student deliver your check to the cafeteria or the school office.

### **Increased Security**

When students scan their student ID or enter their PIN, information about the student appears on the screen so that the cashier can confirm that the account actually belongs to this student. Pictures of the students have been added to the system, their picture will also appear on the cashier's screen.

When students enter their PIN onto the PIN Pad or by scanning their student ID, the computer will show the cashier the current balance in the account, the amount due for meal, and any other personal notes you may want attached to your child's record such as any dietary or spending restrictions. (A reminder that any dietary restrictions must have doctors excuse with the alternative choice- this is a federal regulation.)

Balances as well as any unpaid charges carry-over from one school year to the next. If you have any questions, please call the Food Service Office, at 610-469-5127 or 610-469-5701.