

# Western School Corporation Food Service Department

## General Café Information & Charging Policy

The Western School Corporation Food Service Department utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system, **Café Enterprise**. Upon enrollment, all students are given a café account and 4-digit PIN number. Money deposited into this account can be used for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk and a la carte items.

### **I. Payment Options**

The Food Service Department strongly recommends that money is pre-paid into an account prior to the point-of-sale. Depositing cash or checks during the breakfast or lunch service interrupts the flow of the line and reduces the total time students have to eat. The following payment options are available:

- a. Major credit card online at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com)
  - i. **NO** service fee to make payments, check available balance or monitor purchases
  - ii. Easy to enroll, convenient & secure
- b. Check
  - i. Check must be made payable to the corresponding school.
  - ii. Must have student's name & 4-digit PIN number in memo.
  - iii. If more than one student is on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each account.
  - iv. If a check is returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), we will attempt to collect all money owed. In the event it cannot be collected, a third-party collection agency will be utilized.
- c. Cash
  - i. Primary & Intermediate students must turn payment in to teacher in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with name & 4-digit PIN number.
  - ii. Middle & High school students must turn payment in to cafeteria in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with name & 4-digit PIN number.

### **II. Account Balance Information**

Western School Corporation expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their student's café account and maintaining a positive balance. **Free and reduced-price meal assistance is available to all households at any time throughout the school year.** Paper meal applications can be obtained from the Food Service Office or any school office secretary. Online meal applications can be accessed at [www.pantherfood.com](http://www.pantherfood.com). Contact the Food Service Office at 765-883-1465 with any questions related to free and reduced-price meals.

#### **Students will no longer be given written negative account balance notices.**

The Food Service Department utilizes the **Skylert** system to notify parents of low and negative account balances. Any student with a lunch account balance below \$5.00 will receive an automated phone call Tuesday through Friday.

In addition, account balance information may be obtained in the following ways:

- a. [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com)
- b. Contact the food service manager at the student's school:

Primary Cafeteria-Ele King:	883-1441
Intermediate Cafeteria-Christy Frazier:	883-1442
Middle School Cafeteria-Leanna Tate:	883-1443
High School Cafeteria- Kim Deardorff:	883-1444

### III. Charging Guidelines

Western School Corporation wants to ensure that all students have access to nutritious meals daily. However, we are not allowed, per USDA regulations, to incur bad debt from unpaid meal charges. For this reason, we cannot allow large debt to accumulate on students' café accounts. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires school food authorities to establish written administrative guidelines and procedures for meal charges. We realize that there may be extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from having money on their account from time to time. In the event a student does not have money on account or in hand to pay for a meal, we will adhere to the following guidelines:

- A student may charge up to **five (5) lunch meals** maximum (one charge per meal).
- A student **may not charge** a breakfast meal or purchase "a la carte" items, including extra main entrees, sides, beverages or snacks.
- As previously stated, the Food Service Department utilizes the **Skylert** system to notify parents of low and negative account balances Tuesday through Friday. Students are also verbally notified of their account balances as they come through the lunch line. The food service manager or other school personnel will coordinate additional communication with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to resolve the matter of unpaid meal charges.
- If, after 5 lunch meals have been charged and a payment has still not been received, schools will provide a courtesy meal (turkey & cheese or PB&J with milk) until the negative balance is paid off and the account is brought to a positive balance.
- If the account is still not paid after three weeks, the Corporation will take action to collect all balances owed by means of collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method deemed necessary by the Corporation. Please note that any of these collection methods may incur additional charges to you.
- If food service staff suspects that a student may be abusing this policy, written notice will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that if he/she continues to abuse this policy, the privilege of charging meals and/or receiving courtesy meals will be refused.
- If a student repeatedly comes to school with no lunch and no money, food service staff will report this to the building principal, as this may be a sign of abuse or neglect and **the account will be subject to a referral made to the Department of Child Services of Howard County.**
- A Western staff member may charge up to **\$10.00**, as long as they establish and maintain a good credit history of making payments on their food service account. The balance owed must be paid in full by the end of the school year.

### IV. Guests

All guests are expected to pay for their meal at the time of purchase. Charging is not allowed.

### V. Excess Funds/End of Year Balances

Any funds remaining in a student's café account at the end of the school year will be carried over into the next school year. In the event that a student leaves the school district, any café account that has \$5.00 or more remaining on it is entitled to a refund. A verbal or written refund request must be submitted to the Food Service Office within 30 days after the date the student leaves the district in order for any balance to be refunded. Contact the Food Service Office directly by calling 765-883-1465 or emailing [llarimor@western.k12.in.us](mailto:llarimor@western.k12.in.us).

At the end of each school year, positive account balances of graduating students will automatically be transferred to sibling accounts, as applicable, or automatically refunded if \$5.00 or more remains on the account. There is no need to contact the Food Service Office regarding graduating student account balances.

Unclaimed remaining balances will be transferred to the 3490/Unclaimed Balance account within our Café Enterprise system.