



## POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MONEY MATTERS Frequently Asked Questions



- Q1: Can I prepay for meals even if I do not use the online system?**  
**A1: Yes.** You can send in prepayment monies at any time. We recommend parents send in checks rather than cash. All monies should be submitted only to the school office or food and nutrition personnel. Checks should be made payable to PUSD Food and Nutrition and should be written in **blue** or **black** ink. When sending a prepayment, please include the student's name on the face of the check. If you send cash, please place it in an envelope and write the child's name on the face of the envelope.
- Q2: How can I monitor when my child eats and how much she/he spends?**  
**A2:** Food and nutrition account viewing is available online for parents at: [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com). Simply click on the link and enroll your child. If you do not have internet access, please contact the appropriate supervisor for your child's school.
- Q3: Will my child have the same Personal Identification Number (PIN) every year?**  
**A3: Yes.** Your child's PIN will remain the same as long as they attend PUSD. It is important to remind your child not to share his/her PIN with other students.
- Q4: What steps are taken to safeguard my child's account?**  
**A4:** All students have PINs that they punch in at the Point of Sale (POS). Students' school pictures pop up on the POS screen to help cashiers properly identify students. Please remind your child that the PIN is confidential and should not be shared with other students.
- Q5: What happens if another student uses my child's account?**  
**A5:** This rarely happens because the computer can detect and notify the cashier when an account number is entered for a second meal during the same meal period (except a la carte items). If this should happen, the food and nutrition supervisor will investigate and take the necessary action to resolve and/or mitigate the problem. Please feel free to monitor your child's account online at: [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com).
- Q6: Can students charge their meals?**  
**A6: No.** The District has a "no charge" policy for students; all meals must be paid for at time of service. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that their child has money in his/her accounts or brings a meal from home. Parents can also prepay for meals by using their credit or debit cards online at: [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com).
- Q7: What happens if a student forgets his/her lunch money?**  
**A7:** Elementary schools have site specific procedures in place to ensure students do not go without something to eat. Please contact your child's school for information regarding forgotten/lost lunch money. There are no established procedures in place for middle and high school students. We encourage parents to place \$20.00 in their child's account as "lunch insurance."
- Q8: How do I get a refund of the money in my child's account?**  
**A8:** Money left in students' accounts is carried over from year-to-year for as long as the student remains enrolled in the District. Parents/guardians may request a refund by using the [Parent Refund/Transfer Request Form](#) or they should ask that the funds be transferred to a sibling's account. It is important to note that refunds must be requested within one year of the student's departure from the District. To request the transfer by phone, please call the Food and Nutrition office at 858-668-2562.



## POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MONEY MATTERS Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)



**Q9: How do I request a transfer of funds between my children's accounts?**

**A9:** Meal account transfers can be requested by using the [Parent Refund/Transfer Request Form](#) or calling the Food and Nutrition Accountant at 858-668-2562.

**Q10: How do parents know when their child's lunch account is running low?**

**A10:** Food and Nutrition staff members are instructed to notify students when their account has a five-day balance. Parents can also use the online system to check their current account balance at the following link: [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com).

**Q11: How do you handle returned checks with insufficient funds?**

**A11:** There is a \$20.00 service fee for all returned checks. The face value of the check plus the service fee is deducted from the family's school meals account. Parents are notified by letter to replace the returned check after an attempt is made to contact them by phone. No purchases may be made from accounts with outstanding bad checks.

**Q12: Why do faculty and staff pay more for meals than students?**

**A12:** The District receives federal reimbursement only for meals served to students. By law, adult meal prices are not subsidized by federal and state reimbursements; as a result the adult meals are priced higher. Adult meal prices also include local sales tax. Student meal prices are lower because they are subsidized by federal and state reimbursements.

**Q13: If I desire to eat with my child, can I use the funds in my child's account to eat?**

**A13: No.** The computer system records and monitors the child nutrition pattern for each individual ID number. The program works in conjunction with other programs used to maintain records, student counts, reimbursements, and general operational practices monitored and audited by the USDA. Parents should pay separately for their meal when eating with their children.

**Q14: What happens to my child's money at the end of the school year?**

**A14:** Money left in students' accounts is carried over from year-to-year for as long as the student remains enrolled in the District. The funds will also advance to another school in the District as your child progresses through Poway Unified School District.

**Q15: How much taxpayer money is used to operate the Food and Nutrition Program?**

**A15:** The Food and Nutrition Program is a self-supporting operation. No funds from the District's General Fund are used to operate the school meals program. The Department operates solely on funds received from the sale of meals plus reimbursements from the federal and state government to support the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

**Q16: Who establishes the prices for school meals and a la carte food items?**

**A16:** School meal prices are established by the School Board. Prices for reduced price meals are established by the federal government. A la carte prices are established by the Director of Food and Nutrition to cover the cost of food, salaries, benefits, equipment, supplies, utilities, transportation, and other overhead expenses.

**Q17: Why do "Second Meals" cost more than regular meals?**

**A17:** The first meal is priced lower because it is subsidized by federal and state reimbursements. Second meals are not subsidized by federal and state reimbursements and may be purchased at a la carte prices, which cover the full cost of preparing/serving the meal.