



## Meal Charge Policy

Revised 8/1/18

### Purpose

The Pembroke Pines Charter School System is dedicated to providing its students with healthy meals each day. The purpose of this policy is to comply with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's requirement, to clearly communicate the meal charge policies in place for all students, as well as to have a uniform meal charge policy throughout the Pembroke Pines Charter School System.

### Policy

#### **1. Payments and Account Balances**

Payment for all meals are expected **at** or **prior** to the time of purchase. It is the responsibility of the parents to monitor their student's meal account balance and ensure that there are sufficient funds to pay for their student's meals. Meal balances can be obtained, for free, through the MyPaymentsPlus website (<https://mypaymentsplus.com/>), the MyPaymentsPlus mobile app, or at the Point of Service. Payment options for student meal accounts are listed below.

#### **Payment Options**

- Pay online with a debit or credit card by visiting <https://mypaymentsplus.com/> (there is a small service fee of 4.75% per payment)
- Pay through the MyPaymentsPlus mobile app with a debit or credit card (there is a small service fee of 4.75% per payment).
- Send in cash or a check with the student. A check should be made payable to Pembroke Pines Charter Schools.
- Come into the cafeteria and make a payment in the form of cash or check payable to Pembroke Pines Charter Schools.

If financial hardship exists, parents are encouraged to complete a Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application (F&R Application). There are two ways of applying. (1) Complete an online F&R Application by going to **freeandreduced.pinescharter.net** or (2) complete a paper F&R Application. If you are completing a paper F&R Application, you may stop by the charter school front office and request a copy or you can download it and print it from the **PinesCharter.net** website → Click on Families & Communities Header → Food Services → "download and print the F&R Application". Please note that the F&R Application may be completed at any time during the school year.

#### **2. Negative Balances**

One or more of the following actions will be taken should your account achieve a negative balance:

- A written notification indicating the low/negative balance will be given to the student every day to be taken home. The notification will be given to the student by the Chartwells staff at the point of service.
- An email notification will be sent from MyPaymentPlus indicating the negative balance. (You must have a MyPaymentsPlus account in order to receive this notification.)
- A robo-call pertaining to the negative balance will be made to each household which carries a negative account balance every day until the student's account is brought current (positive balance).

- A formal letter will be mailed to each household once a week until the negative balance is brought current (positive balance).
- A school administrative staff member will make a phone call to the respective household regarding the negative balance.
- The negative balance will be added to JupiterEd.
- A hold will be placed on the student's eligibility to participate in school events such as field trips, dances, graduation, etc., until the account is brought current (positive balance).
- An alternative reimbursable meal will be given to the student. The alternative meal will be a cheese sandwich meal, which meets the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's nutritional standard guidelines.
- Ultimately a limit will be placed in the point of service system that will not allow any charges.

### **3. A la Carte Items**

Students must have a positive balance in their general account in order to be able to purchase any *a la carte* items; the balance must be sufficient enough to cover the purchase. Students with a balance of \$0 or below will only be allowed to purchase a reimbursable meal. A reimbursable meal is a meal, which meets the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's nutritional standard guidelines.

### **4. Refunds**

One attempt will be made to refund positive meal account balances of students who withdraw or graduate from the Pembroke Pines Charter School System. After that attempt has been exhausted, it is the responsibility of the parent to request any refunds of such balance remaining in the account.

### **5. Additional Information**

- 12<sup>th</sup> graders with a balance below \$0 will be withheld their cap and gown and will not be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony until their account is brought current (positive balance).
- Students who withdraw during the school year with a negative account balance will not have their school records released to their new school until their account balance is brought current (positive balance).
- All negative balances are expected to be paid within the current school year.
- For continuing students: Any balance (positive or negative) remaining at the end of the current school year will be rolled over to the subsequent school year. All negative balances are rolled over to the subsequent school year, and the punitive actions outlined in section 2 of this policy, will commence on the first day of the subsequent school year.
- Students approved for free meals cannot be denied a meal, even if they have a negative balance on other cafeteria purchases.
- The Charter Schools will prevent overt identification of children eligible for free, reduced price, and paid meals.
- A written copy of this policy will be provided to all households and transfer households.

**If you have any questions regarding this policy, your student's meal account, or about completing a Free and Reduced Application, please call (954) 518-9030.**

**BY SIGNING BELOW, YOU ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE PEMBROKE PINES CHARTER SCHOOLS MEAL CHARGE POLICY AS LISTED ABOVE. YOU FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOU HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND, AND ACCEPTED THE POLICY IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature**

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Printed name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Name**

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*Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

*mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410*

*fax: (202) 690-7442; or*

*email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*

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