

## SCHOOL MEALS AND SNACKS

The Buchanan County School Board recognizes that students need adequate, nourishing food in order to learn, grow, and maintain good health.

### Generally

To reinforce the division's nutrition education program, foods sold to students during regular school hours on school premises will be

- carefully selected so as to contribute to students' nutritional well-being and the prevention of disease;
- prepared in ways that will appeal to students, retain nutritive quality, and foster lifelong healthful eating habits; and
- served in age-appropriate quantities and at reasonable prices.

The Buchanan County School Board promotes high-quality school meals and snacks by

- providing a variety of food options, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy foods, which are low in fat and added sugars;
- offering a variety of healthy choices that appeal to students, including cultural and ethnic favorites;
- restricting student access to unhealthy foods in vending machines, school stores, and other venues that compete with healthy school meals; and
- ensuring that healthy snacks and foods are provided in vending machines, school stores, and other venues within the division's control. The healthy options should cost the same or less than unhealthy alternatives.

The Buchanan County School Board strives to provide an environment conducive to good health by

- allowing an adequate amount of time and space for students to eat school meals;
- scheduling lunch periods at reasonable hours around midday;
- ensuring that drinking fountains are operable, clean, and convenient for use throughout the school day;
- offering extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs, intramural programs, or interscholastic athletics;
- discouraging the promotion and advertising of unhealthy foods;
- using non-food items rather than food items such as candy, cakes, soda, and foods high in fat, as incentives and rewards for good behavior or academic performance; and
- encouraging parents to support the division's nutrition education efforts by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks which they may donate for occasional class parties.

The Buchanan County School Board supports nutrition education and physical education by

- ensuring that qualified nutrition education and physical education specialists focus on knowledge and skill development so students are able to learn and adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors;
- offering nutrition education in the school dining area(s) and in the classroom, with coordination between food service staff and teachers; and
- eliminating any stigma attached to, and preventing public identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

### Meals and Snacks

Meals and snacks offered as part of the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program meet, at a minimum, the requirements established by state and federal law and regulation.

Schools make potable water available and accessible without restriction to children at no charge in the place(s) where lunches are served during the meal service.

### Unpaid Meal Charges

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative that financial stability of the school nutrition program be maintained.

Unpaid meal charges are not allowed in the Child Nutrition Program. Therefore, no free meals may be served unless a student has been approved for such through the proper application process.

In order to assure compliance, the following procedures will be implemented:

### **Student cafeteria accounts have a \$15.00 charge limit. Adults are not allowed to charge meals.**

- Once the \$15.00 limit is reached, students will not be allowed to charge a meal.
- Once the limit is reached, all regular meals will be on a cash basis until the debt has been cleared or a payment plan arranged.
- No a la carte charges are allowed.
- Each student will be fed a regular reimbursable breakfast or lunch.
- Administration may exclude students from extra-curricular activities or restrict privileges for students who have a cafeteria debt.
- No student will be denied a meal.
- It is the family's responsibility to monitor their child's account balance(s).

- Pre-payments are encouraged, allowing students to move through the lunch lines faster resulting in more time to eat.
- Parents should be encouraged to apply for free/reduced lunch during fall registration or at any point their household status or income level changes.
- The individual school is responsible for collecting charges allowed on cafeteria accounts.
- The individual school will be responsible for student debt incurred in the cafeteria each year. Cafeteria balances shall be paid each year.
- Balances will not be carried forward from year to year.

### Communicating the Policy

The policy will be communicated to all students and households by the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year.

- The unpaid meal charge policy will be posted on the Buchanan County Public Schools website, will be included in the student information packet distributed on the first day of school, will be included in the school calendar and will be provided to all transfer students during the school year. The Household Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals will be attached.
- The unpaid meal charge policy will be communicated to all division staff prior to the first day of school.
- Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on meal charge policy and record of training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
- Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

### Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance in Student Cafeteria Account

Notices of low or negative balances in a student's meal account are sent to parents and the school principal. Parents are expected to pay all meal charges in full by the last day of the school year.

- Weekly contact will be made with parents/guardian if money is owed.
- When the debt reaches \$15.00, the cafeteria manager will notify the parents/guardian by phone.
- If the debt is unresolved, the principal will call the parents/guardian.
- If the debt is still unresolved the principal will report to the school nutrition supervisor. The school nutrition supervisor will then call parents/guardians.

- In the event parents cannot be reached by phone, other methods of communication will be initiated (letter sent home by student and/or letter in the US mail).
- Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.
- All calls will be documented, and parents will be encouraged to apply for free/reduced meal benefits if the need exists.

If a parent regularly fails to provide meal money or send food to school with the student and the student does not qualify for free or reduced benefits the child nutrition director will inform the principal, who will determine the next course of action, which may include notifying the department of social services of suspected child neglect and/or taking legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges.

The superintendent ensures that federal child nutrition funds are not used to offset the cost of unpaid meals and that the child nutrition program is reimbursed for bad debt. In order to accomplish those goals, the following procedures are followed:

- At least one written notice is provided to a student and the student's parent or guardian for exceeding the division's charge limit.
- If payment of the negative balance is not received within 5 working days of the maximum charge limit being reached, the food service supervisor will call parents. In the event payment options cannot be resolved the superintendent will be notified for further collection options.

## Competitive Foods

### Definitions

"Competitive food" means all food and beverages other than meals reimbursed under programs authorized by the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day.

"School campus" means all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

"School day" means the period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

All competitive food sold to students on the school campus during the school day meets the nutrition standards specified by federal and state law and regulation.

Each school may conduct 30 school-sponsored fundraisers per school year during which food that does not meet the nutrition guidelines for competitive foods may be available for sale to students.

The Buchanan County School Board is responsible for maintaining records that document compliance with this policy. Those records include receipts, nutrition labels and/or product specifications for the competitive food available for sale to students.

#### Assistance to Households

Households with questions or needing assistance may contact the school office where their student attends or the School Nutrition Program office at 276-935-4551 ext. 243 or 276-935-4551 ext. 259

Adopted:

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Legal Refs: U.S. Department of Agriculture, SP 46-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policies, July 8, 2016.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, SP 47-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Clarification on Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments, July 8, 2016.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-207.4.

Virginia Board of Education, A Resolution to Establish and Define Exemptions for School-Sponsored Fundraisers Pending Incorporation in the Proposed Regulations Governing Nutritional Guidelines for Competitive Foods Available for Sale in the Public Schools (Nov. 19, 2015).

Cross Refs:	EFB	Free and Reduced Price Food Services
	IGAE/IGAF	Health Education/Physical Education
	JHCF	Student Wellness
	JL	Fund Raising and Solicitation
	KQ	Commercial, Promotional and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships