



# Policy & Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

## Valley Christian Schools Food Services Department

### **Purpose**

The Valley Christian Schools Food Services Department provides nourishing meals to our students and helps fuel their learning in the classroom. The department operates as a self-funded entity, like any other business, and unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on the school. The intent of this policy is:

- i. To be transparent with our families on the school procedures for handling unpaid meal charges
- ii. To establish policies that are age-appropriate for our students
- iii. To encourage parent/guardian responsibility of meal payments and charges
- iv. To outline the actions the school will take to implement and enforce the policy and collect outstanding debts

### **Purchasing & Payments in the Cafeteria**

Every student has a meal account created during the enrollment process. Students use their Student ID number to access their account and make purchases in the cafeteria. Purchase restrictions must be arranged with the Food Services Dept. directly at 330-788-8088 ext. 1113. Money can be applied to a student's account electronically through the school website under student services. Cash or check may be sent in an envelope, marked with the student's name and ID number, to your student's cafeteria. Payments are applied to negative meal debt first, if applicable, and any additional funds will remain as a positive balance for future purchases. In-line credit card payments will begin during the 2023/2024 school year.

### **Charging Meals (Negative Account Balances)**

Meal charges in the cafeteria are to be made in emergency situations when a student has forgotten their lunch or money. Only complete meals can be charged; extras cannot be charged. Extra purchases are prohibited when an account has a negative balance. Charging meals is like using a credit card. Meals can be charged to a meal account with payment made at a later time. Charging occurs when a student does not have enough money in their meal account to cover a purchase, causing a negative account balance (or meal debt). Parents are responsible for paying all meal debt on their student's meal account. Keep in mind that a student's meal account balance can fluctuate multiple times each day due to payments made and/or meal and a la carte purchases.

#### **PLEASANT GROVE ELEMENTARY & NETWORK OFFICES**

3919 Southern Blvd.  
Youngstown, OH 44512  
330.788.8088 x1506

#### **CENTRAL CAMPUS INTERMEDIATE & HIGH SCHOOL**

4401 Southern Blvd.  
Youngstown, OH 44512  
330.788.8088

#### **THE LEWIS CENTER FOR GIFTED LEARNING**

30 West Front St.  
Youngstown, OH 44503  
330.788.8088 x1401

#### **HIGHWAY TABERNACLE ELC**

3000 S Raccoon Rd.  
Youngstown, OH 44515  
330.792.3000

#### **OLD NORTH CHURCH ELC**

7105 Herbert Rd.  
Canfield, OH 44406  
330.727.4742



## **Notification and Collection of Meal Debt**

Parents are responsible for their student's meal account. The Food Service department frequently attempts to notify families of negative meal account balances. Parents and/or guardians are notified by email or text of their child's lunch account on a monthly basis and are able to check online through the school website.

## **Free Status Students**

Eligibility for free meal benefits starts the day an application is approved in our system. Until that time, parents are responsible for providing lunch money or a packed lunch and for paying back any meal debt accumulated prior to approval. The debt will remain on the account until the parent pays it off in full. New applications must be filled out each September even if one is already on file.

## **Charge limits**

Students who have a negative balance of more than \$30.00 will be given an alternative meal that consists of a cereal bowl, fruit, two cheese sticks, a grain product, and milk. In addition, students who owe more than \$30.00, which is the equivalent of 2 weeks of charged breakfasts and lunches, will not be allowed to purchase any extra items such as snacks, drinks, or WAMs (extra entrée' purchased with a meal) or be able to order Eagle Eats.

Meal debt is a school fee that remains and accumulates with the student throughout their enrollment at Valley Christian Schools. Meal debt must be paid before withdrawing or graduating. As the school continues to make debt collection efforts, certain privileges may be revoked at the district and building principal's discretion, such as:

1. Report cards and transcripts held
2. Non-academic field trip privileges held
3. Fun day privileges held
4. Admission into Homecoming/Prom prohibited
5. Limiting participation in seasonal sports

NOTE: This policy is exclusive to meal debt in the cafeteria and does not include academic school fees

## **Staff Charge limits**

Staff will be permitted to charge up to \$40.00 in food or drink purchases. No charges can be made after reaching that limit. Payroll deductions may be applied for accounts higher than \$30.00. Arrangements can be made with the food service director.

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## Food Service Information 2023/2024 School Year

- All students will eat in the cafeteria or assigned area
- The menu is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances
- Student's may purchase a school lunch or bring a packed lunch from home upon arrival
- Lunch consists of an entree (2 meat, 2 grain), fruit, vegetable, and milk. Students are offered 5 components to a meal. Only three are required, one must be a fruit or vegetable. The other two components are optional.
- Bottled water, 100% fruit juice, milk, and a-la-carte items are available from the cafeteria for all students to purchase
- Meals from outside establishments may not be purchased for delivery by or for students. (No KFC, Subway, etc. deliveries). Please note that VCS is a closed campus, which means that students may not leave the school grounds to purchase lunch elsewhere. No deliveries of lunches to the school during lunchtime from parents or establishments. This is a time and temperature concern with food-bourne illness.
- Extras, snacks, ice cream, and drinks will be available to purchase. There will be no charging of these items. Students must have money on their account or cash in hand to purchase extras.
- WAM's are offered at the central and PG campuses. This is a program that if a child receives a meal then they may buy an extra entree for \$1.00 (With A Meal). Otherwise an entree is \$1.75.
- No microwave use for packed lunches due to temperature cooking guidelines and allergy concerns.
- No child may purchase extras or order Eagle Eats if their account is in the negative.

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Applications for free or reduced price meals are in the school office, on the web page, or by calling the food service department at 330-788-8088 ext 1113. Some students may be eligible for participation in the free and reduced lunch program.

Eligibility forms require updates yearly and are submitted by October. Otherwise, parents are responsible for any lunch cost that occurs until forms are turned in and processed. Food service department will notify you of your status.

Valley Christian Schools participate in NSLP, CACFP, SSO, AND FFV Federal programs.

- Breakfast price is \$1.50 (\$0.30 reduced) and lunch price is \$3.00 (\$0.40 reduced)
- A free afternoon snack is offered during class for grades K-3 at PG and central
- Dinner is free at central right after school for 30 minutes for all VCS students who stay after school for any reason.
- Menus are located on our school web page and in the cafeterias.

[www.valleychristianschools.net](http://www.valleychristianschools.net)

Alternate meal options are offered daily. Menus may change due to availability of product.

**All allergies must be submitted with proper documentation from a doctor for the food service department to comply with the request.** Paperwork is also required for any food intolerances.

### **"Eagle Eats"- Offered to grades 6-12 only.**

A student who does not want the menu meal scheduled on a given day may fill out a form on our food service web page by 7:40 Am ( Middle school) and 9:30 am. ( High School)The meal will be grab and go from the staff service window in the cafeteria.

This meal still falls under the free, reduced, and paid status.

Failure to pick up a meal will result as a charge to the student's account in the category in which they fall. Purchase of all extras still requires a trip to a line cashier.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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