



SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL

Developing the whole person: Academics, Faith, Community and Character

Meal Charge Policy for Saint Francis Xavier School

Reviewed 7/07/25

Purpose - The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent procedures for Saint. Francis Xavier School to (a) provide meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and (b) collect the amounts owed for meals that have been ordered and not paid for.

General Statement of Policy

1. Saint Francis Xavier School recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits.
2. Saint Francis Xavier School also recognizes that it is necessary to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program in order to continue to offer this service to our community.
3. It is the policy of Saint Francis Xavier School to offer high quality lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure that no child goes hungry.
4. Payments to student accounts are made by logging into the family's ParentsWeb account and making an online payment. We recommend that families set up a recurring payment to help keep their account current.
5. Families may apply for free and reduced-price school lunch at any time during the school year. Applications for this program are distributed to households via email prior to the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the applications as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school office during regular business hours and online at www.sfxvt.org. If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year.
 - a. Households that apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced-price lunch without an approved application or direct certification on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with Laurie Rossi, school Finance Manager, at 655-2600, ext. 1, to see if the application has been received.
 - b. Households that are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits or who qualify based on percentages related to the federal poverty level, will receive a notification of eligibility letter based on Direct Certification from Saint. Francis Xavier School if the school has received information about their child(ren). If your household receives these benefits and you have not received information regarding eligibility of your child(ren), the household must contact the school immediately to provide current information.
 - c. Free and reduced-price eligible students may receive a lunch each day at no charge.

- d. A carton of milk that is not purchased as part of a hot lunch is considered an a la carte item, and as such is not allowed to be charged by a student who qualifies for free and reduced lunch, and is \$40 or more in arrears.

Meal Charge Policy

1. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for lunch:
 - a. Students will be allowed to charge up to a total of \$40.00 in lunch costs.
 - b. An alternate meal - which meets the state meal pattern requirements - will be offered to those students with a negative account balance in excess of \$40.00.
 - c. All students will be provided "the alternate meal" regardless of their meal account status.
 - d. All negative balances must be paid prior to the end of the school year or a payment plan for bringing the account current must be in place.
2. Free and reduced-price eligible students will always be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts.
3. A student who is ineligible for paid meals due to a negative balance in excess of \$40, but who has "cash in hand" at the time of meal service will be provided a hot meal or sandwich (subject to availability).

Account Status Notification

1. Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in the student accounts to cover weekly meal purchases.
 - a. Families can check their account balances online via FACTS.
 - b. Families may also contact the school at 655-2600, ext. 1, or finance@sfxvt.org to set up an automatic payment plan. This would ensure that there are sufficient funds in the student's lunch account at all times.
2. SFX families will receive an email if:
 - a. We are unable to charge a delinquent balance to their FACTS account.
 - b. If a FACTS lunch charge gets returned for NSF.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt

1. **When the student balance remains in the negative by more than \$10 at the end of a month, the school will charge the families FACTS account for that negative balance.**
2. All funds owed to the food service program on the last day of school will be charged to the family's FACTS account or an alternative payment plan must be in place.