



Meal Charge Policy SY23-24

The goal of the Creative Minds International Public Charter School (CMIPCS) is to provide students access to high-quality and nutritious no- or low-cost meals each school day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our school. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal requirements for the NSLP + HSA Child Nutrition Programs, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

The intent of this policy is to establish procedures to address unpaid meal charges throughout CMIPCS. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school breakfast and lunch meals only. CMIPCS provides this policy as a courtesy to those students in the event that they forget or lose their lunch money. Charging of items outside of the reimbursable meals (a la carte items, adult meals, etc.) is expressly prohibited.

- Free Meal Benefit - Free eligible students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. Note: all students in the District of Columbia eat free breakfast.
- Full Pay Students – Parents will pay for meals at the school's published paid meal rate each month in advance of the beginning of each month. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child if applicable.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program through our website payment portal. Discreet notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year from the CMIPCS Director of Operations or appointed designee.
- Parents/Guardians may pay for meals in advance via web address for prepay or with a check payable to CMIPCS. Further details are available on our webpage at www.creativemindspcs.org or from the administrative office. Any remaining funds for a particular student may/will be carried over to the next school or refunded by prior arrangement.
- Refunds for withdrawn, and graduating students; a written or emailed request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling's account with a written request.
- Unclaimed Funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the CMIPCS Food Service Program.

Balances owed. In the event of a family owing the school monies for previous months, the school will contact parent/guardian by email by the end of the following month. If no response to email, a reminder will be sent by email and a phone call will be made to parent. If no response, the school will send letter to parent's home address. During this period meals will continue to be served to student. The school will work with parent to pay in installments if needed to bring their account to zero. Failure to pay all or part of the amount due may result in:

- End of year progress report cards being withheld
- Parents that fail to pay and do not have an agreement regarding overdue payments may lose out on other activities offered by the school
- After 90 days, overdue collections may be referred to a collections agency for payment

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child if applicable.