



Gladstone School District 115

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Samantha Nelson
Director of Finance and Operations

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Gladstone School District places a high level of importance on ensuring every child has access to a nutritious meal during the school day and continues to serve all kids. Research has consistently found that kids do better in school when they eat regularly and healthily.

Lunch shaming has been in the news for several years with an increased focus in the last two years. Gladstone School District is adamant in developing positive procedures that *do not* result in students feeling shamed or singled out due to a balance owing on their lunch accounts. It is for this reason that we have developed the following procedures and do not take food away from students or deny meals. If your child is incurring charges against your wishes, we ask you to contact the building principal to develop a plan as the cafeteria cooks are not allowed to deny a meal to a student; thus, families are responsible for the charges incurred by their students.

To ensure that our kids are eating regular, healthy meals, we have established the following:

A meal charge account will be created for each student at the beginning of each school year. Students who go through the meal service line, will be charged for the meal they receive. Due to state requirements of safe food handling, once food has been served it cannot be taken away and then re-served, but would have to be thrown away. To avoid this waste and to protect students from embarrassment (*lunch shaming*), Gladstone School District charges each students meal account that goes through the food service line. To avoid charges being applied, students must not go through the meal service line but bring a lunch from home.

If a parent/guardian does not wish to have his/her student charge meals to their account, it is up to the parent to instruct their student accordingly. Cafeteria staff do not monitor or enforce parental directives. However, building principals are available to assist parents'/guardians' regarding this issue with their students if needed and/or requested by the parent/guardian.

Current Meal Prices are as follows:

	Breakfast per day	Per Week		Lunch per day	Per Week
GCCF	\$ 1.50	\$ 7.50		\$ 2.55	\$ 12.75
JWE	\$ 1.50	\$ 7.50		\$ 2.55	\$ 12.75
WLK	\$ 1.60	\$ 8.00		\$ 2.85	\$ 14.25
GHS	\$ 1.90	\$ 9.50		\$ 3.45	\$ 17.25

Parents/Guardians are asked to pre-pay for their student’s meals to maintain a positive balance. In the instance where an amount is owing, statements are sent electronically to the email account on file, or mailed home, the first week of each month. Any balance due, is due upon receipt. Account balances and activity are available for parent/guardian review at any time via mymealtime.com.

The parent/guardian will be contacted for any student failing to keep his/her account current. For balances due greater than \$50.00 the following procedures will be followed:

1. The District will issue a letter to the parent/guardian requesting immediate payment or establishment of a payment plan agreement.
2. If payment is not received, the building principal will contact the parent regarding the balance due and establish a plan to bring the account current while ensuring daily healthy meals for the student.
3. If the parent/guardian does not respond to payment requests, the student may lose access to activities and the debt may be forwarded to a collection agency unless immediate action is taken by a specific date by the parent.

Students who transfer out of the district with a balance owing, will be notified as follows:

1. Parent/guardian will be notified by letter of the amount owing.
2. If no response, amount may be submitted to a collection agency.

If a balance is owed to a student when they leave the district, staff will ask the parent which of the following options they would prefer:

- Have the balance transferred to a sibling still in the District, or
- If balance is \$10.00 or more, have a check issued, or

- If the balance is less than \$10.00, have cash payment issued by the GHS bookkeeper.

Payments on student accounts can be made by doing one of the following:

1. Logging on to www.mymealtime.com and creating an account to pay online, or
2. Sending a payment to school with your student to be dropped in the meal payment box in the main office of the building.

Thank you for your support of Gladstone School District and its' commitment to ensuring every child has access to a nutritious meal during the school day.

Sincerely,

Samantha Nelson
Director of Finance and Operations