

*Updated July 25, 2017*

## **Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School • Meal Charge Procedure**

### **Overview**

Leland and Gray is committed to providing the opportunity for all students to access nutritious meals in a cost-effective manner. The Abbey Group provides meals to our school, breakfast/ snack, lunch, and an after-school meal.

#### **Payment for students' meals:**

- Meals will be paid for either in advance or with cash at the register daily.
- Parents/guardians will honor their responsibility to provide breakfast and lunch for their children, either by packing meals or making payments for purchasing meals.
- Parents will ensure that money is deposited into their child's individual meal account to maintain a positive balance.

### **Notes on the Meal Charge Procedure**

**Abbey Food service operations are based on debit (pay upfront), not credit (pay after purchase).** In recognition of the fact that students may occasionally forget their money and that this can be both embarrassing and stressful for students, the payment collection procedure (found on p. 2 and 3) sets forth the steps to handle meal charges while being both sensitive to student needs and mindful of the fiscal responsibilities of the school meals program.

Parents and guardians are expected to keep track of student balances a [www.abbeygroup.net](http://www.abbeygroup.net) Whenever a student has a zero balance, an Abbey Group staff member contacts the parents as soon as possible.

Families are strongly encouraged to apply for the free and reduced price meal program. Applications will be processed in a timely manner. All information is kept confidential and students receiving free/reduced meals will not be identifiable when they receive their meals. All students will access their account upon entering a PIN and the cost of the meal will be debited from the student's individual meal account.

Students eligible for reduced-price or free meals may receive one breakfast and one lunch per day. Extra meal items are not part of the USDA Free and Reduced meals program and are not allowed to be charged.

Extra meal items and à la carte items may not be charged unless a student has money in his/her account.

If students bring cash to purchase a breakfast or lunch, then they are permitted to do so, no matter what the balance is.

Leland and Gray recognizes that if a parent fails to provide for the nourishment of his/her child during the school day either by applying for free and reduced meals or by making the necessary provisions for the student to purchase school meals, then this may be evidence of abuse or

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neglect, and that may constitute grounds for the responding professional educator to file a report and notify the Vermont Department for Children and Families.

The after-school meal is free for all students, no matter their balance.

### **Meal Charge Procedure**

#### **Middle School Students**

Students who do not have money in their accounts or who do not bring money for meals are permitted to charge a maximum of **two meals**. Staff-members will take the following steps:

#### **After the first charge:**

1. An Abbey Group staff member calls the parent and states that payment will be expected the next day.
2. An Abbey Group staff member informs the student.
3. An emergency meal for breakfast and lunch is provided. This charge is \$.75 each, for a total of \$1.50.

#### **After the second charge:**

1. Students will be called to the office at the start of the school day to meet with the L&G administrative designee. The designee will ask the student if he/she has money for a meal. If the child does not have money, an emergency meal will be provided.
2. The designee will contact the parent/guardian by phone and state that payment will be expected the next day. The designee requests that the parent contact the Abbey Group to arrange a payment plan if needed, such as paying \$5 per week towards back due balance.
3. The second (and last) emergency meal for breakfast and lunch will be provided. This charge is \$.75 each, for a total of \$1.50.
4. If no payment is made, then the student is expected to bring meals from home.
5. The food service manager and the lunch monitor will monitor the student at meal periods to make certain the student is bringing meals provided by the parent.
6. The food service manager in conjunction with school administration will determine if further action is warranted.

#### **Third incident:**

1. Students who have a zero or negative balance will be called to the office at the start of the school day to meet with the designee. The designee will ask the student if he/she has money for a meal. The designee informs the student that no meal will be provided and they may not come in the cafeteria.
2. The designee calls home to ask the parent (1) to bring in the money or a lunch, (2) state that payment will be expected the next day, and (3) that DCF will be called if payment is not sent in the next day, or the student does not come to school with lunch. The designee

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requests that the parent contact the Abbey Group to arrange a payment plan if needed, such as paying \$5 per week towards back due balance.

### **High School Students**

High school students are expected to remain aware of their meal account balances and to bring deposits as necessary. Cashiers remind students daily when their account is low or overdrawn and will give them written notification of their balance to bring home.

#### **After the first charge:**

1. An Abbey Group staff member will call the parent/guardian and state that payment will be expected the next day.
2. An Abbey Group staff member informs the student.
3. High school students will be allowed to charge meals for **one day** only.
4. Students will not be permitted to purchase any à la carte items, including milk.

#### **After the second charge:**

1. Students will be called to the office at the start of the school day to meet with the designee. The designee will ask the student if he/she has money for meals.
2. The designee calls home to ask the parent (1) to bring in the money or a lunch, (2) state that payment will be expected the next day. The designee requests that the parent contact the Abbey Group to arrange a payment plan if needed, such as paying \$5 per week towards back due balance.

#### **Third incident:**

1. Students who have a zero or negative balance will be called to the office at the start of the school day to meet with the designee. The designee will ask the student if he/she has money for meals. The designee informs the student that no meal will be provided and they may not come in the cafeteria.
2. The designee calls the parents and informs them that the student will not be served a school meal and asks that they bring in lunch or the money.
3. If the parent fails to send the student to school with lunch or the money, then the designee calls DCF.

## **Additional Steps**

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Seniors who have a negative balance in their Abbey Group account may be excluded from Class Night and/or Commencement ceremonies.

When a student who was ineligible to purchase school meals becomes eligible again, the Abbey staff-members will inform school administration in writing as soon as possible.