



# EASTON-REDDING-REGION 9 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

## Lunch Payment System & Food Charging

As of June 30, 2017 in compliance with CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 4-17

The Easton, Redding & Region 9 food service program uses the Mosaic (Previously NutriKids) point-of-sale system in the school cafeterias. **All students enrolled in the school are automatically set up with an account in the Mosaic system** based on their student ID number. Parents may opt out of this system by completing the “Add/Remove Block to Student Account” form on the ER9 website. Parents may also request that restrictions be placed on what their child may purchase.

The process is easy. A parent/guardian deposits money into their child’s account. The student’s individual account is accessed as they make purchases in the cafeteria. At the elementary schools, your child has a bar-coded card that can be read by a scanner at each terminal. (The card is kept in the classroom and distributed each day before the lunch period.) When your child comes through the lunch line, the cashier simply scans the card, your child’s name and picture appear on the terminal, the cashier presses the meal your child is selecting, and the price of the meal is deducted from your child’s account. At the secondary schools, when your child comes through the lunch line, they simply enter their student ID number into the key pad. Your child’s name and picture appears on the terminal; the cashier rings up your child’s meal purchases and the cost is deducted from their account or they pay cash. Students may use cash to purchase their meals, however; pre-payment speeds the lunch lines and allows your child more time to eat.

### How do I pre-pay for meals or milk?

There are three ways to put money into your child’s account:

1. **MySchoolBucks:** You may set up an account through a secure online website [www.mySchoolBucks.com](http://www.mySchoolBucks.com) and pre-pay whatever dollar amount you choose (to a maximum of \$120 per student) using your Visa, MasterCard, or Discover credit card, or debit card. You may also make payment using an e-check payment directly from your bank account. You will be charged a low convenience fee of \$2.75 per transaction. (A parent with multiple students can add funds for all students for \$2.75. These charges cover the cost of bank fees. The school district does not earn any income from these fees.) You will need your child’s name, student ID number and school zip code to set up an account on mySchoolBucks.com. You may call your school office to obtain the student ID number. You may visit the ER9 website to view the “mySchoolBucks Parent Guide” to help you in setting up an account.
2. **Payment by Check:** You may send in a check to the Cafeteria Manager. The Cafeteria Manager will enter your check amount into your child’s account. Checks should be made payable to Easton-Redding School Lunch Program. (There is no fee for this method of payment.) Please put your child’s name, ID number, and grade on the check.
3. **Cash Payments:** You may send in cash to the Cafeteria Manager. The Cafeteria Manager will enter your cash amount into your child’s account. Cash should be in an envelope marked to Easton-Redding School Lunch Program. (There is no fee for this method of payment.) Please put your child’s name, ID number, and grade on the envelope.
- 4.

### How do I know the balance in my child’s account?

You can check your child’s account balance by registering your child on mySchoolBucks. There is no cost to do this. Simply log onto [www.mySchoolBucks.com](http://www.mySchoolBucks.com) and follow the instructions for registering your child. You will need his/her student ID number to do this. You can obtain your child’s student ID number by calling your school office or the Food Service Office at 203-938-2508 x1567. Registering your child on mySchoolBucks does not mean that you have to pay through mySchoolBucks. It allows you to view a balance at any time on-line. You can also set up an “e-mail low balance notification” on the mySchoolBucks website. They will send you an e-mail notice when your child’s account is getting low. There is no cost to do this.

### Can I view what my child has purchased for lunch?

Yes, by logging onto [www.mySchoolBucks.com](http://www.mySchoolBucks.com) you can view what your child purchased for lunch. (You must register your child on mySchoolBucks before using the Purchase History feature.) Once you register your child on

mySchoolBucks, click on the item called Purchase History. Select your child's name and a date range and the purchase information will appear.

**What happens if my child doesn't have any money in his/her account and wants to buy lunch?**

**At the elementary schools**, if your child's account balance reaches zero, they will be allowed emergency lunch loans. After \$10 is owed, you will be contacted via email for payment. After \$25 is owed, you will be contacted and request lunch be provided from home until the account is paid in full.

**At the secondary schools**, if your child's account balance is zero, they will be permitted to charge up to 3 additional meals or until the balance reaches negative \$10. At this point the parent/guardian will be contacted via email for payment. **Students at the secondary level will have to pay cash for meals until their account is replenished.**

If your child's account balance is zero or negative, you can log onto [www.mySchoolBucks.com](http://www.mySchoolBucks.com) and make a payment to your child's account. The payment is usually deposited into your child's account within 15 minutes.

Students who have a zero or negative balance will not be allowed to charge the cost of any "extra" food items – water, juice, snacks, frozen dessert – to their lunch account.

**What if my child receives free or reduced price meals?**

The computer system is confidentially coded indicating whether they receive free or reduced-price meals. If your child receives free meals, there is no charge to their account for one full school meal. Students who receive reduced-price meals must have money in their account or pay cash. The cost of one reduced lunch is \$0.40 per day. At the elementary schools when your child comes through the lunch line, they simply give their card to the cashier. Your child's name appears on the computer screen. The cashier rings up your child's meal purchases, and the cost, if any, is deducted from their account and off they go. At the secondary schools, your child keys in their student ID # and their name appears on the screen. The cashier rings up your child's meal purchases, and the cost, if any, is deducted from their account and off they go. If the student chooses to buy a **second** meal or ala carte items, the cost will be charged at full price to the student's account.

**Do I need to use all the money in my child's account this school year?**

No. Any money left in your child's account at the end of this school year will be carried over to the next school year.

If you have any questions regarding the lunch payment system, please call David Kennedy at the Food Service Office at 203-938-2508 x1567.

**Unpaid Meal Charges**

The District's efforts to recover from households money owed due to the charging of meals must not have a negative impact on the children involved, and shall focus primarily on the adults in the household responsible for providing funds for meal purchases. Money owed because of unpaid meal charges shall be considered "delinquent debt," as defined by federal and state statutes, as long as it is considered collectable and reasonable efforts are being made to collect it. Effective with school year 2017-18, the Connecticut State Department of Education requires that the household pays all delinquent student debts no later than June 30 to ensure that students' accounts are closed. Any delinquent debts that have not been recovered by June 30 will be considered bad debt. Negative balances cannot be carried over to the next school year. Student meal accounts must be at a zero balance for the next school year.

**IN ORDER FOR THIS SYSTEM TO RUN SMOOTHLY AND PROPERLY, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT MONEY BE IN YOUR CHILD'S MYSCHOOLBUCKS ACCOUNT.**

**Free/Reduced Meal Applications:**

Any parent/guardian who anticipates a problem with paying for meals is encouraged to submit a free/reduced meal application form (**annually**) as well as when their household information or income changes. Applications can be submitted at any time and are available at Central Office or on the ER9 website. While ER9 strongly encourages families to apply for free/reduced meal benefits, the final application responsibility lies with the parent/guardian.

*This administrative practice shall be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households with students transferring into the District during the school year.*