

School Meal Payments

The district is committed to ensuring that all students receive the nutrition they need to engage in active learning during the school day. In accordance with applicable federal guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), this policy is intended to serve the purposes of meeting student needs, minimizing the identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals and maintaining the fiscal integrity of the district's school food service account.

Student meal accounts and meal charges

Family meal accounts shall be established by the district.

Parents will be encouraged to pre-pay for students paying full or reduced price for meals. The district shall ensure that parents have access to at least one no-cost method of paying for meal services, such as the ability to pay in person.

Students will be permitted to pay for meals and/or add funds to family accounts on the day of service.

If a student has money to purchase a full or reduced price meal at the time of the meal service, the student must be provided a meal. The student's money may not be used to repay previously unpaid charges if the student intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

Students paying full or reduced price for meals and who do not have money in the family account or in hand to cover the cost of a meal at the time of service will be permitted to charge a meal. However, these students will be denied permission to charge à la carte or "extra" items, such as a second milk or additional entrée.

Students may charge up to \$25.00 in the family account before the student/s will no longer be permitted to charge meals.

Notification of low or negative balances

Notification of a low balance on a family account will be provided by the point of sales clerk by the following methods:

1. A note will be sent home via a student under the family account when \$10.00 in charges has accrued.
2. A phone call will be placed to the parents/guardian when \$20.00 in charges has accrued.
3. A family account may only accrue charges to \$25.00. Once the account reaches this limit student/s under the family account will no longer be allowed to charge meals or a' la carte or "extra" items, such as a milk.
4. If the account remains unpaid for one week after the charge limit is met, the account will be given to the superintendent for help with collections.

Collection of meal charge debt

In collecting debt, the district shall ensure that collection efforts do not have a negative impact on the students involved and instead focus on the adult(s) in the household responsible for providing funds for student meal purchases. The district will work with parents to establish repayment plans with payment levels and due dates appropriate to the household's particular circumstances.

For families with delinquent meal charges, the following process will be used to collect debt. The Superintendent or their representative, shall call, text, email, or mail notification and the expected time frame for payment. If no payment, response, or request is received from the parents/guidance outside collection proceeds may be used.

Collection efforts from one school year may continue into the following school year, including when students transfer to a school outside of the district.

Annual notice

The district shall notify students and their parents about this policy at the beginning of each school year. Notification shall also be provided to those students who transfer into the district during the school year. Information about this policy may also be included in student handbooks, student enrollment or registration packets and/or back-to-school packets and posted on district and school websites.

This policy will also be communicated to school and district-level staff responsible for this policy's enforcement, such as school food service staff responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, staff involved in notifying families of low or negative balances, and staff involved in enforcing any other aspects of this policy.

LEGAL REF.: USDA Guidance SP 46-2016 (requires written policy regarding unpaid meal charges)

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