

SCHOOL MEAL CHARGE POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent district practices for the provision of meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

Adults

Adults are prohibited from charging meals.

Dissemination

The Superintendent must ensure that uniform meal account policy is provided in writing, to all parents of students at the start of each school year and to the parents of students transferring to the school mid-year. The Superintendent shall also provide the policy to all school and district-level staff members responsible for the enforcement of this regulation.

The District may use additional methods to disseminate the policy on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

Payment Options

Parents are responsible to ensure that students have sufficient funds to purchase school meals each day or pre-pay for meals, to avoid accruing meal charges. District payment options for student meal accounts include in person, mail, or sending money with a student.

Free and reduced-price meal applications will be mailed with registration packets and are available at school. Applications will be accepted at any time during the school year.

Charging Procedure

In the event a student has insufficient funds in their meal account, the District shall allow the student to charge up to **10** reimbursable meals, the cost of which must be deducted from the student's meal account.

A student with a negative meal balance is prohibited from charging a la carte or extra items (e.g., a second milk or additional entrée.)

Administration may prohibit participation by the student in any future fee-based programs until the negative meal account is paid in full.

Payment Reminders

Families will be notified by email, text message or phone call 3-5 days before lunch money is due. Additional reminders will be sent weekly until new tickets are purchased. Every effort is made to give the parent enough time to coincide with pay cycles when needed. If a pattern of charging continues, administration shall attempt to contact the student's parents and encourage the parent to complete a free or reduced meal application. Nothing in this procedure prohibits school district personnel from reporting suspected abuse or neglect of a student as required by law.

Unpaid Meal Charges

Parents are expected to pay all charges within 10 days. If they fail to do so, the District may rollover debt or refer the debt to collections.

Lunch: If a student reaches their 8th charge, the family will receive daily warnings regarding their option to either pay or send a lunch with their student after the 10th charge. If the family fails to pay for a new ticket and the student reaches the maximum of 10 charges, the student will not be allowed to eat school lunch and will have to bring their own lunch until the charges are paid for and a new ticket is purchased. If the student brings money on a given day, they will be allowed to eat that day with no regard of the negative balance.

Breakfast: If a student reaches their 8th charge, the family will receive daily warnings regarding the need to pay or be denied breakfast after the 10th charge. If a student reaches a maximum of 10 breakfast charges, they will be denied the breakfast meal until charges are paid and a new ticket is purchased. If the student brings money on a given day, they will be allowed to eat that day with no regard of the negative balance.

Balance

Students returning to school in the district shall see a positive meal balance rolled forward into their meal account for the next year. Students that graduate or withdraw from the district may receive a refund of the remaining balance in their meal account within 15 workdays of completion or departure unless they wish to donate the funds.

If a graduating student has siblings in school, any remaining meal funds will be transferred to their siblings. Any money left in an inactive account may be donated to help struggling students with insufficient funds in their meal accounts.

Complementing NDSBA Templates (may contain items not adopted by the Board)

ABEC-AR, Adult Meals

End of Ashley School District #9 Policy ABCDAdopted: February 8, 2023