

5415-R Unpaid Student Meal Debt

All students will receive a Personal Identification Number (PIN) which will remain the same as long as they are an enrolled student. Students must use their PIN numbers when purchasing any items from the cafeteria. All students can prepay for their meals by depositing cash or check into their accounts. Prepayments are accepted daily at the school or online using credit or debit cards. Online payments could take up to 24 hours before they arrive in a student's account.

All parents/guardians will have the right to apply for meal assistance from the National School Lunch Program. For all newly enrolled students in Campbell County School District, there is a four-day grace period to allow processing of a meal eligibility application.

- If the parent/guardian application for free meal status is approved, the balance owed for unpaid meals during the grace period shall be forgiven.
- If the application for reduced meal status is approved, the balance for unpaid meals shall be recalculated at the reduced meal rate, with payment due within ten calendar days of written notification to the parent/guardian.
- If the student's application is not approved, the balance for prior purchased meals in the grace period is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Eligibility Status

Eligibility status for District students taking part in the lunch program is categorized into three areas; paying, reduced price, and free. An explanation of each is below.

Paying Status: Students who do not qualify for free or reduced priced meals are considered paying students. Paying students are expected to pay for all meals at the time of sale or on credit as allowed by policy. The District must provide a meal if they have money in-hand to pay for the current meal regardless of any account balance. The District does have the right to refuse to serve them a reimbursable meal if these students have reached the charge limit an alternative meal will be offered. A reimbursable meal is defined as a meal in which five components are offered— milk, fruit, vegetable, meat (or an approved meat alternate like beans, yogurt or cheese), and grain. For a meal to be reimbursable, students must choose three full portions of the five, with at least one choice being a fruit or vegetable.

Reduced Price: Students may qualify by making application to receive school meals for a reduced price if the household income meets eligibility requirements set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Students receiving reduced price meals are expected to take a reimbursable meal and pay for all meals purchased at the time of sale or on credit as allowed by the District. These students must always be provided a meal, even if the student owes money. Children whose families have income between 130-185% federal poverty level can qualify for reduced price meals.

Free: Students may be eligible to receive free school meals and may qualify by making application. These students must always be provided a **reimbursable** meal even if the student owes money. Children whose families have income at or below 130% of the federal poverty level can qualify for free meals.

Allowable School Meal Charges

Any District student ~~in grades K-6~~ who does not have money to pay for their meals will be allowed to charge the District cost of five lunches. Snacks and drinks will not be allowed to be charged.

~~Any student in grades 7-12 who does not have money to pay for their meals will be allowed to charge the District cost of five lunches. Snacks and drinks will not be allowed to be charged.~~

Resolution

The following resolutions may be made to be proactive in parent notification in an effort to control balances.

- School contacts will be made **daily** to the parent/guardian of a student who has a negative meal account.
- Low balance notices will be provided ~~be sent home~~ prior to students needing to charge meals.
- ~~• Individual schools will notify parents of negative balances.~~
- Notify and/or work with principals and school counselors to understand the student and parent's situation and if a free/reduced price application is needed.

~~Once a child reaches their maximum in charges (paying student), a phone call will be made to the home stating the student has reached the maximum charge limit. If the student owes the maximum charge limit on the account, and the student comes to school with no money,~~ School personnel cannot deny a current meal to pay for a past due account when the child is either prepaying or pays on a daily basis. **When a paying status student reaches their maximum charge limit** the student will receive an alternative meal. An alternative meal is an individually wrapped cheese sandwich and a milk. These meals are not allowed to be reimbursable, but still provide the child with adequate servings of protein, whole grains, vitamins, and minerals.

~~However, if a child has a negative balance in their account, they will not be permitted to purchase a snack or drink until their negative balance is paid.~~

Collection

Parents will be responsible for paying for student's meals and any charges incurred prior to submission of an application for free and reduced lunch, if applicable.

~~Once it is determined that a delinquent account is not collectible, it shall be considered a bad debt and treated as an operating loss which cannot be absorbed by the non-profit food service account.~~

Campbell County School District may, if it is unable to collect the delinquent meal charge, turn the matter over to a collection agency to pursue collection and/or refuse to award the student credit until the unpaid charge is paid, in accordance with **state statute**. ~~W.S. 21-4-308~~. If it is determined, after six (6) months of efforts to collect delinquent accounts, that it will not be paid, the district may consider it a bad debt and treat it as an operating loss. Documentation of collection efforts shall be maintained.

Notification

The District will provide a copy of this policy and regulation, via the student handbook, to all student households at the beginning of each school year. Transfer students will receive a copy of this policy and regulation via the student handbook.

ADOPTION DATE: May 23, 2017; **Minor Revisions December 13, 2022**

LEGAL REFERENCE(S): W.S. 21-4-308

CROSS REFERENCE(S): 5410 School Meal Programs, Policy 5415, Unpaid Student Meal Debt