

Charging School Meals

The Board of Education recognizes that on occasion, students arrive at school without lunch or without funds to purchase lunch. To ensure students do not go hungry, but also to promote responsible student behavior and minimize the fiscal burden to the School Meal Program, the Board will allow students who do not have enough funds to "charge" the cost of meals to be paid back at a later date subject to the terms of this policy.

The School Meal Program is self-sustaining and does not receive general fund support for routine operations, and thus must generate funds through student and adult sales, a la carte sales and federal/state reimbursement. Unpaid charges reduce revenue that affects the ability to pay outstanding bills and employee salaries. Uncollected charges may result in higher meal prices for all students.

To comply with State guidelines and maintain a system for accounting for charged meals, regarding both full and reduced-priced meals, the Board shall allow only regular reimbursable meals to be charged, excluding extras, a la carte items, and snacks. Students may not charge any a la carte item or snack at any time.

Charges will be limited as outlined below:

Meal Charge Rules

1. After Charges 1-5, an automated phone call will be made to the home of the student.
2. After Charges 6-20, a live phone call will be made to the home of the student.
3. After Charge 20, parents will be asked to come to the school for a face-to-face meeting with the building administrator or school meal program manager.

At the sole discretion of the Superintendent of Schools, students who have outstanding charges at the end of the school year may not be permitted to participate in the following activities as applicable:

- Graduation Ceremony or Moving Up Ceremony or any other public ceremony marking the end of the student's time in a particular school.
- Junior/Senior Prom
- End of school year dance
- Receive a High School parking pass
- Purchase a yearbook or any other memory or class book sold to students at the end of the school year

All parents are to be provided with a copy of this policy at the beginning of the school year along with applications for free and reduced lunch programs. Additionally, this policy will be posted on the District's website in the Food Service section.

When charged, the cafeteria cashier will inform the student that they need to bring money to school the next day to pay for the meal. A social worker or counselor may be contacted at the discretion of the building principal at any time to assist in the notification of outstanding meal charges.

Students eligible for free meals shall not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from other cafeteria purchases. No student with unpaid charges will be prohibited from purchasing food if they have money that day.

Accounting for Charged Meals

- The District shall use a computer-generated point of sale system to track all meals on account and to record repayment to the District. The student's name, eligibility status

for free and reduced lunch, and the dates that the student received a charged meal shall be maintained in the system. The system must follow state guidelines.

- Charged meals must be counted and claimed for reimbursement on the day the student charged (received) the meal, not the day the charge is paid back.
- When charges are paid, these monies are not to be considered "a la carte" transactions. A section on the daily cash report or deposit summary should be provided which identifies "charges paid." An audit trail should be established that identifies the monies for charges paid as "Sale of Meals to Children" for ST-3 or Analysis of Cash Resources reporting purposes.

Staff

Staff members are allowed to purchase food from the District's food services. However, all purchases must be on a cash basis. Staff members will not be allowed to charge meals to be repaid later.

Ref:

[42 USC §1779](#)(Child Nutrition Act of 1966)

[42 USC §§1758](#)(f)(1); [1766](#)(a) (National School Lunch Act)