

MEAL CHARGE

The Board of Education recognizes that, on occasion, students may forget to bring meal money to school. To ensure that students do not go hungry, but also to promote responsible student behavior and minimize the fiscal burden to the District, the Board will allow students who forget meal money to charge the cost of meals to be paid back at a later date subject to the terms of this policy.

It is the responsibility of a student's parents/guardians to ensure that money for the student's lunch is either brought to school to pay for lunch or that money regularly is deposited into a student's meal account to cover the costs of the student's purchases.

To comply with State guidelines and maintain a system for accounting for charged meals, regarding both full and reduced-price meals, the Board will:

1. Allow students to charge only regular meals (this excludes extras, snacks or a la carte items);
2. Limit charges to five per student at the elementary and middle school level. No charges will be permitted at the high school level;
3. After a student has reached the charge limit, the student will not be permitted to charge a regular meal, but will be served an alternate meal that meets nutritional needs;
4. Use a computer-generated point of sale system that identifies and records all meals and repayments.

The following steps will be followed to collect charge balances:

- If a student has an outstanding charge, an attempt to contact the parent/guardian will be made.
- On a monthly basis or when the maximum number of charges has been reached, whichever comes first, a letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian.
- If a balance remains unpaid for longer than 30 days, the Building Principal may contact the school social worker for follow up.
- Unpaid student meal charges will carry over from year to year until they are paid in full.

A student who has abused this policy can be refused a meal. This refusal is not considered to be a violation of any State or federal laws concerning school food programs. If a school staff member believes that a student is abusing this policy, that staff member must notify the Building Principal. Before denying any student a meal, the Building Principal will send a written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian.

Staff members will not be permitted to charge meals.

The District will send a copy of this policy and a letter outlining the policy's requirements to all parents/guardians on an annual basis prior to the opening day of school. The policy will also be posted on the District's website and in appropriate school and District publications. The District will provide a copy to all District staff members responsible for this policy's enforcement.