

Meal Charge Policy

It is the policy of the District to comply with the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.

Student Eligibility

Families of students who may be eligible for free or reduced price school meals should submit an application to determine their eligibility. Applications are mailed to each student household at the start of the school year and are available at each school office and Central Office. As long as an application is submitted on or after July 1, the application will be considered current for the new school year. A student may become eligible for free or reduced meals at any time during the school year if the household experiences a change in financial circumstances or household size and a new application is approved.

Meal Account Balances

The District will ensure that families can check their meal account balances online or contact the school directly or Central Office. The District will ensure that at least one form of meal account payment is free of charge.

The District encourages families to prepay for meals. Students and families may also add funds during the school day. Any balance remaining in an account shall carry over into the next month. Households with funds remaining in their account at the end of the school year may request a refund or carry over funds to the next school year. When a student leaves the District or graduates, the District shall attempt to contact the student's household to return any funds remaining in the student's meal account.

Each school will notify the student, parent, or guardian that the balance is getting low by sending a note, an automated phone call, an email, or ask the student to contact the parent or guardian. If the balance becomes negative, no further regular breakfasts or lunches will be offered. Rather an alternate meal will be provided to the student as approved by the Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services or a sack lunch may be brought from home. We request that food brought from home have nutritional value and should not contain fast food, soda pop, or energy drinks. Ala carte purchases will be prohibited if the student does not have money in their account.

Unpaid meal charges may be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and the District shall undertake reasonable collection efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt, pursuant to and in compliance with state and federal law. The District shall maintain records of its collection efforts and, once delinquent meal charges are converted to bad debt, its documentation establishing and handling of the bad debt.

Student Confidentiality

The District will disclose individual student eligibility information only to those persons (and organizations) that require the information in order to carry out an activity specifically authorized by the National School Lunch Act, subject to applicable legal exceptions.

The District shall not use or implement any colored or coded meal cards, tickets, tokens, or other methods of payment that would overtly identify a student as being eligible for free or reduced price meals.

Distribution Annually

This policy shall be provided in writing to all students' households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the District during the school year.

This policy shall also be provided annually to District staff members responsible for the enforcement of this policy, including food service professionals.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall maintain documentation of the annual distribution of this policy to students' households and District staff.

Legal Reference: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. § 1751);
U.S.D.A. Memorandum SP 57-2016.

Adoption: 6/12/2017