

MEAL CHARGES

In accordance with state and federal law, the Charles City Community School District adopts the following policy to ensure school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day, prevent the overt identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition program.

Payment of Meals:

Students and staff will have use of a family meal account. When the family balance reaches -\$30.00 students and staff members may no longer make purchases. A la carte purchases will not be allowed as soon as the balance goes negative. When an account reaches this limit, students and staff shall not be allowed to charge further meals until the negative account balance is paid. Payment on the accounts can be made to the kitchen cashiers or at any of the school offices. Electronic payments also can be made at any time by logging into the family account.

Students who qualify for free meals never shall be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt shall be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received.

Negative Account Balances

The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low. Additionally, the school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. The school district will coordinate communications with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Families who use the automated email, text, school messenger option can set balance notification limits that they want to be notified. All families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the negative balance reaches \$5. Reminders are sent home weekly at the elementary level. Family accounts with low levels may receive a notification by mail from the District office. In some instances, building administration may become involved. Negative balances of more than -\$30.00 not paid prior to the end of the school year will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

For all donations made for delinquent accounts, it will be the discretion of office personnel which accounts the donation will be deposited into, unless the donation is made to a specific family. The district cannot release family account information.

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Communication of the Policy

The policy and supporting information regarding meal charges shall be provided in writing to:

- All households at or before the start of each school year;
- Students and families who transfer into the district, at time of transfer; and
- All staff responsible for enforcing any aspect of the policy.

Records of how and when the policy and supporting information was communicated to households and staff will be retained.

The superintendent may develop an administrative process to implement this policy.

Legal Reference: 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 *et seq.*
7 C.F.R. §§ 210 *et seq.*
U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., SP 46-2016, UNPAID MEAL CHARGES: LOCAL MEAL CHARGE POLICIES (2016).
U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., SP 47-2016, UNPAID MEAL CHARGES: CLARIFICATION ON COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL PAYMENTS (2016).
U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., SP 57-2016, UNPAID MEAL CHARGES: GUIDANCE AND Q&A (2016).
Iowa Code 283A.
281 I.A.C. 58.

Cross Reference: 710.1 School Food Program
710.2 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility
710.3 Vending Machine

Approved: June 26, 2017