

Food Service Payment

Introduction

The District uses an automated meal accounting system (SKYWARD) to record food service payment and to monitor food transactions. The system functions as a debit system. Parent/guardians are expected to maintain their meal account in positive status. A bar code/scan system will be used to charge student accounts and track charges.

Parents/guardian who cannot afford to pay for the cost of their children's meals may complete an application for free or reduced meals in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition program regulations.

The Superintendent or designee shall be expected to protect the taxpayers of the District by making every effort to collect all food service related charges due the District. The District shall have guidelines in place that identify criteria for the use of small claims court, collection agencies/service, and debt resolution.

Food Service Payment Guidelines

Family Accounts: Each family, not individual students, participating in the food service program will have an account in which funds may be deposited at any time and in any amount to pay for breakfasts, lunches and/or milk. Parents are encouraged to make payments via our online service. Parent or students may deposit money at any building office.

Money submitted before 10:00 am will be credited to the family account on the day submitted. Money submitted after 10:00 am will be credited on the following school day.

A receipt will be given for all cash payments. When payments are made by check, the canceled check will be considered as the receipt.

Free and Reduced Family Accounts: Annually the district office will mail the application for free and reduced meals to every family attending district schools. The application may be completed and returned at any time. Additional applications can be retrieved from the district or appropriate building offices at any time during the school year.

Account Charges: Elementary students are allowed to charge one breakfast and one lunch per day. Students in middle/high school are allowed to charge one or more breakfasts and lunches, along with a la carte items.

Low and Negative Balance Notification, Collection Procedures, and Alternative Meals

1. Families with account balances at or below \$10.00 will be notified by an automated messaging system that will run a minimum of two times a week.
2. Family with accounts balances with a negative balance will be notified daily by an automated messaging system. The notice will include the amount owed and a notice that further actions could be taken that include elementary students receiving a “sack lunch” consisting of a sandwich and a carton of milk when their family account reaches a negative \$25.00. No breakfast will be offered if the account is a negative \$25.00. Payment or payment arrangements will be expected within five calendar days of the message.
3. Families will be notified by automated messaging, personal telephone call, and/or mail when their family account is \$25.00 in arrears. This notification will also inform them that the elementary student(s) will receive a “sack lunch” consisting of a sandwich and a carton of milk until the account balance is paid in full or a mutually agreed upon payment plan is reached.

Students attending the middle/high school whose account owes more than \$25.00 will be notified by automated phone call, personal telephone call, and/or mailed a statement that notifies that the amount owed and a notice that the child will not be allowed to charge meals or a la carte items to their account. Students will not be offered a “sack lunch” or other alternative meal.

In accordance with USDA regulations, children receiving free meal benefits will be provided a first serving for breakfast and lunch even if the family account is in arrears. Balances incurred prior to application approval remain the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

All students will be provided a meal if they have money in hand to pay for a current day’s meal even if the food service accounts includes an uncollected amount.

4. The principal and administrative assistants in the elementary school will be informed of students receiving a “sack lunch” in the respective buildings and classes the morning of the scheduled denial.
5. If the student is served a “sack lunch” for 10 consecutive days without parent/guardian making payment or arrangements, the Department of Human Services will be contacted.
6. Parents/guardians will be sent a certified letter if there has been no response to the notification concerning the \$25.00 negative balance within fourteen calendar days.

7. The Superintendent or designee may proceed with legal action to secure collection of unpaid debts not paid within 60 days of receipt of the certified letter unless an alternative payment plan has been reached. The charges for the legal action shall be added to the unpaid debt due the district.
8. At the end of the school year, a letter will be sent to families whose accounts are \$25.00 or more in arrears stating that the negative balance must be paid prior to the start of the next school year.
9. The Superintendent and Bookkeeper shall review all outstanding obligations and approve for write-off any debt which they determine remains non-collectible at the end of each fiscal year.

Refunds: Family account balances will be carried over from school year to school year. Refunds of family account balances will be made for the following reasons:

1. All enrolled students in the family leave the district.
2. A graduating senior is the only family member enrolled in the district.
3. A family becomes eligible for free meals under Federal guidelines.
4. The amount of refund is over \$5.00.

The Superintendent may also issue refunds for other reasons.

Approved: August 4, 2003

Revised: June 24, 2017