

Policies of the Board of Education

Section G – Support Services

SCHOOL MEAL ACCOUNT CHARGES AND COLLECTIONS

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In accordance with requirements established by federal and state oversight agencies, the School Board will adopt, and approve any proposed revisions to a written rule on the subject of meal charges and the collection of funds within the District's food service program. The District Administrator and Director of Food Services shall have primary administrative responsibility for overseeing the consistent implementation of the rule that accompanies this policy, including all of the following:

1. Ensuring that the rule is clearly communicated to school families and to District employees who have responsibility for the application and enforcement of the rule.
2. Monitoring the nutritional, fiscal, and operational impacts of the District's approach to meal charges and collections, and, at their own initiative or upon the request of the Board, providing the Board with reports and recommendations for changes and improvements.
3. Coordinating the implementation and enforcement of the rule with the management and staff at any contracted food service company that the District may work with.

In addition to the rule accompanying this policy addressing student meal charges and account collections, it is the policy of the District that non-student adults who are permitted to purchase meals or other items through the food service program may be authorized to charge items resulting in a negative balance in an amount up to \$50.00, with payment due immediately upon notice of the balance.

Reclassification of delinquent debt as bad debt within the Nonprofit School Food Service Account (NSFSA). In consultation with the District's financial auditors as needed, the District Administrator and/or Director of Business Services shall develop procedures and criteria for the reclassification of long-term delinquent debt within student food service accounts as uncollectible bad debt. Such procedures and criteria shall be consistent with the following general parameters:

1. Unless an active payment plan is in place or other attempts at collection are actively being pursued, delinquent debt in a student food service account that has not been repaid within 60 days shall normally be reclassified as bad debt for purposes of the District's NSFSA.
2. The reclassification of a delinquent debt to a bad debt as an accounting of allowed costs within the District's NSFSA does not prevent the District from (a) continuing to track the unpaid debt, (b) accepting payment for the debt, (c) refusing to extend further credit or offer other payment plans to the debtor household, or (d) applying other District policies and rules related to unpaid charges and fees.

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USDA Nondiscrimination Statement:

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Esta institución es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.

Please see Policy 700.32 for the District's full Non-discrimination statement for food service.

Legal References:

Wisconsin Statutes

<u>Section 115.34</u>	[school lunch program, generally]
<u>Section 115.341</u>	[school breakfast program, generally]
<u>Section 115.343</u>	[Wisconsin school day milk program, generally]
<u>Section 115.347</u>	[direct certification of eligibility for school nutrition programs]

Federal Law

<u>42 U.S.C. §1758(b)(2)(A)</u>	[school district duty to publicly announce the income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced price meals]
<u>42 U.S.C. §1758(b)(6)</u>	[confidentiality of federal meal program application information and eligibility status; disclosure limitations]
<u>7 C.F.R. §210.12</u>	[district duty to involve families in the school meal programs and to inform families about the availability of federal food programs]
<u>7 C.F.R. §245.5</u>	[district duty to inform school families and the community about the availability of reimbursable school meals (whether free, reduced-price, or paid), the eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price meals, and the process for applying for free or reduced-price meals]
<u>7 C.F.R. §245.6</u>	[application, eligibility, and certification of children for free and reduced-price meals and free milk; restrictions on the disclosure and use of information obtained from an application]
<u>2 C.F.R. §200, Subpart E</u>	[standards for allowable costs as set forth in federal cost principles]
<u>2 C.F.R. §200.426</u>	[treatment of bad debt under federal funding requirements]

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RULE

Key Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians must plan for their child to have sufficient access to food at school on each school day and must actively monitor and manage their child's school food service account, including making prompt payment of any charges. Parents and guardians should communicate with their child about how meals, snacks, and other food will be provided each day.

Meal Charges for Elementary and Middle School Students

When a student wishes to purchase a school meal or any other food service items, but does not have enough money to pay for the items at the time of service, the District's food service account system normally allows a student to charge up to \$50.00 in his/her account as a negative balance before the District will take steps to restrict the student's food choices.

Students who are not eligible for free school meals, who do not have money to pay for their food, who are not permitted to charge items, and who do not bring food from home will be offered an alternate meal for lunch only.

The alternate meal normally consists of the following:

1. Lunch: Discretion of Food Service Director

Consequences for Abuse of Privileges

School officials will address any possible abuse of the privilege of charging food service costs and, if applicable, any overuse of the alternate meal option with the student's parent or guardian. The District may suspend one or both of these privileges if the District determines that there has been an abuse of the privilege.

Negative Account Balances

A negative balance in a student food service account is a debt that is owed by the student's parent or guardian (or, if applicable, by an adult student). Debt that is owed within the food service program does not affect a student's right to access a regular school meal at the time of meal service if either (1) the student is currently eligible to receive free meals at school, or (2) the student has sufficient funds to pay for the meal at the time the meal is purchased.

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Collection Procedures for Food Service Debts

Once a student's account has a negative balance, the District will make an initial and follow-up attempt to collect the debt by providing the student's parent or guardian with notice (e.g., by mail, email, telephone, or similar methods) of the amount owed. Payment is due immediately upon notice. If these attempts are not successful, a school official will attempt to make a person-to-person telephone contact or schedule an in-person meeting with a parent or guardian. The parties may discuss payment plan options. If a negative balance still has not been paid after the previous steps:

1. Debt in a student food service account is not automatically discharged, forgiven, or reduced at the end of the school year or due to a change in a student's enrollment status (e.g., graduates, transfers, drops-out, etc.).
2. At its discretion, the District may continue to pursue collection efforts.
3. Debts owed to the District's food service program may result in the denial of certain school-related privileges in the same manner that applies to other past-due school fees and charges.

Online Account Management

The District offers an online system that a parent or guardian can use to monitor and manage each child's school food service account, including making payments. Online payments can be made with a credit card thru Skyward Family Access. A \$1 service fee is charged for online payments. Additional information about the online account system can be obtained thru www.mylakecountryschool.org when you log into your Skyward account, or by contacting the staff listed below in this notice.

Prepayment

The District strongly encourages school families to establish and regularly fund a prepaid school food service account for each student in the household.

Making Payments

In addition to using the online account system to make payments, a person who needs or wishes to make a payment for a student's meals or food service account may (1) present a payment in person using cash or check during normal school hours to the main office, (2) bring cash to the main office of the student's school in order to pay for a student's meal or other food service items on the actual day of service, (3) provide a student with cash to pay for items on the day of service, or (4) request consideration of other methods by contacting the school District Administrator.

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The District charges a fee of \$30.00 for each check that is returned or denied payment by a financial institution. After a check is returned or denied payment, the District may refuse to accept payment by personal check in the future.

Payment while an Application for Free or Reduced-Price Meals Is Processed

An application for free and reduced-price meals can be submitted at any time during the school year. However, unless a specific exception applies (such as the temporary carryover of prior eligibility), parents and guardians who submit an application remain responsible for payment of all school meals that their child receives until approval is granted. In addition, approval of an application does not eliminate or reduce any charges that were accumulated prior to the date the application was submitted.

Additional Information and Assistance

For assistance with all issues and questions related to the District's food service program, including eligibility and applications for free or reduced-price meals, student food service accounts, the District's online account management system, as well as the specific issues addressed in these procedures, school families can refer to or contact any of the following:

Luanne Heil – Food Service Manager

heill@mylakecountryschool.org 262-367-3606, ext. 124

Mark Lichte – District Administrator

lichtem@mylakecountryschool.org 262-367-3606, ext. 114

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Adopted by the School Board August 14, 2017