



## **MEAL CHARGE AND NUTRITION POLICY**

The Board recognizes the importance of ensuring that all students have access to nutritious meals each school day while establishing guidelines for families regarding meal payments, applications for free and reduced-priced meals, and the handling of unpaid meal balances. The District is committed to prompting student health and learning, while maintaining fiscal responsibility and treating all students with dignity. Every student will be offered a complete, reimbursable meal each day, regardless of their meal account balance.

### **MEAL ACCOUNT PAYMENTS & BALANCES**

- Payment for meals are accepted through a variety of methods, including as, cash, check, and online payments.
- Parents/guardians are expected to prepay into their respective meal account(s), maintaining a positive balance.
- Low balance reminders will be sent to families when their account balance is \$15.00 or less.
- Should an account balance become negative, the parent/guardian will be contacted.
- Ala carte items, extra meals, extra milk, or items from student stores may not be purchased if a student account has a negative balance.
- All negative balances are to be paid in full by the end of the school year.
- All balances at the end of the school year will carry over to the next school year, unless a refund is requested.
- Families who have students who end the school year with a positive balance and do not return the next school year will receive a refund automatically if their balance is \$10.00 or more. Should the balance be less than \$10.00, the parent or guardian may request a refund.

### **COLLECTION OF UNPAID BALANCES**

- Communication regarding unpaid balances will be directed to parents/guardians only, not students.
- The District will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid balances by written notices and personal outreach.
- If account balances reach -\$20.00, parents/guardians will be contacted by the District's social workers in collaboration with Child Nutrition staff to create a payment plan.
- If necessary, unpaid meal accounts may be referred to the District's collection process.
- Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the school social worker or Child Nutrition department for assistance.

### **FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS**

- Families are strongly encouraged to complete a USDA Free and Reduced Meal Benefits Application (MBA).

- MBA applications are available on the school's website, at school offices, and during registration events.
- MBA applications may be submitted at any time during the school year.
- Should an MBA application be denied, families may still be eligible for financial assistance through the School District. An MBA must be completed prior to District assistance opportunities.
- Any and all information regarding free and reduced-priced meal applications and financial assistance will remain confidential.

#### **DONATIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

- The District may accept donations from individuals or organizations to assist in paying for student meal debt.
- When available, donations will be applied in a fair and equitable manner to support families most in need.

Adopted: June 23, 2014  
Revised: September 23, 2019  
November 24, 2025