

MEAL CHARGES

In accordance with state and federal law, the Interstate 35 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

All meal purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins. Families may add money to student accounts (e.g., electronic payment options, pay at the school office, etc.—please contact the high school office for details). Students who do not have sufficient funds shall not be allowed to charge a la carte items until additional money is deposited in the student account. If the account balance is negative \$10, parents/guardians will be notified (see Negative Account Balances below.)

Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases.

The school will notify families a reminder if the student(s) lunch balance is less than \$10.

Employees may use a charge account for meals, but may charge no more than \$20 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, an employee shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid.

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 will be notified of an outstanding negative balance. Negative balances of more than \$100 not paid in full prior to 60 days of receiving notification from school personnel will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection unless contact has been made to the district to create a payment plan. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

Any unpaid balances that remain at the end of the year may be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection.

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.