

### Unpaid Meal Charges

If a student has not paid for five or more previous meals, the school will:

- (1) Determine whether the student is categorically eligible for free meals;
- (2) If no application has been submitted for the student to determine his or her eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, make no fewer than two attempts to contact the student's parent or guardian to have him or her submit an application; and
- (3) Have a principal, assistant principal, or school counselor contact the parent or guardian for the purpose of:
  - (a) Offering assistance with completing an application to determine the student's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals;
  - (b) Determining whether there are any household issues that may prevent the student from having sufficient funds for school meals; and
  - (c) Offering any other appropriate assistance.

No school or school district personnel or school volunteer may:

- (1) Take any action that would publicly identify a student who cannot pay for a school meal or for meals previously served to the student, including but not limited to requiring the student to wear a wristband, hand stamp, or other identifying marker, or by serving the student an alternative meal;
- (2) Require a student who cannot pay for a school meal or for meals previously served to the student to perform chores or other actions in exchange for a meal or for the reduction or elimination of a school meal debt, unless all students perform similar chores or work;
- (3) Require a student to dispose of an already-served meal because of the student's inability to pay for the meal or because of money owed for meals previously served to the student;
- (4) Allow any disciplinary action that is taken against a student to result in the denial or delay of a nutritionally adequate meal to the student; or
- (5) Require a parent or guardian to pay fees or costs in excess of the actual amounts owed for meals previously served to the student.

Communications for a school or school district about amounts owed for meals previously served to a

student under the age of fifteen may only be directed to the student's parent or guardian.

Neither this

policy nor chapter 28A.235 RCW prohibits the district from sending a student home with a notification

that is addressed to the student's parent or guardian.

A parent or guardian will be notified of a negative balance of a student's meal account no later than

ten days after the student's school meal account has reached a negative balance. Within thirty (30)

days of sending this notification, the district will exhaust all options to directly certify the student for free or reduced-price meals. Within these thirty days, while the district is attempting to certify the student for free or reduced-price meals, the student may not be denied access to a school meal

unless the district determines that the student is ineligible for free or reduced-price meals.

If the district is unable to directly certify the student for free or reduced-price meals, the school district

will provide the parent or guardian with a paper copy of, or an electronic link to, an application for free

or reduced-price meals with the negative-balance notification described above and encourage the parent

or guardian to submit the application.

The district's Meal Charge Policy will also address unpaid meal charges. Students who qualify for free

meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous

purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student

pays for the meal when it is received. The District will provide meals to students who have charged the

maximum amount allowed to their student account and cannot pay out of pocket for a meal.

The district will make reasonable, discrete efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low

through use of the Skyward Data Information System. Families will be notified when the balance reaches \$10.00.

Negative balances of more than \$50.00 not paid prior to the end of the school year will be considered

delinquent debt and will be turned over to the superintendent or designee for collection. The district will

make reasonable, discrete efforts to collect delinquent (overdue) unpaid meal charges, which is an

allowable use of National School Food Service Account (NSFSA) funds, and will coordinate communications with families to resolve the charges. Options may include collection agencies, small

claims court or any other collection method permitted by law and consistent with the Fair Debt Collection

Practices Act.

- Entrée & Extra side: Students who plan to have an extra entree or extra side should sign up when

lunch count is taken. Extra entrée is an additional \$1.90 and extra side is an additional \$.75.

Students on Free and Reduced lunches will pay cash for an additional entrée or side.

- REFUNDS: Paid meals will be carried over to the following school year. Refunds will not be made

before the last day of school except in the case of a student withdrawing from school.