

FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT *(Meal Charges)*

Unless meals are provided at no charge, the district expects students and employees to pay for meals prior to or at the time of receipt. The ability to charge meals is a privilege, not a right, and is subject to the limitations established in this procedure.

Employees

Employees may charge meals only after completing the form provided by the district authorizing the district to withhold the amount of any unpaid charges from the employee's pay. The district will withhold amounts due from meal charges in the pay period immediately after the charges are made. Employees may appeal a deduction for meal charges using the process outlined in Board policy DLB.

Students

1. A student may not accumulate more than five unpaid charges for complete meals.
2. A student who has accumulated five unpaid charges for complete meals and is still unable to pay for meals will be provided a substitute meal that meets the district's nutrition guidelines.
3. Substitute meals provided to the student will be charged to the student's meal account.
4. Students may not charge à la carte items.
5. A student with money in hand will not be denied a meal even if the student has past due charges.
6. Students will not be singled out, shamed or punished by the district for the failure of their parents/guardians to pay for or provide meals, and the district will not hold student records in violation of law.

Interventions

After a student accumulates three unpaid meal charges, the district will encourage the parents/guardians to submit an application for free and reduced-price meals if an application has not been recently submitted, and the student will be referred to a counselor for intervention. The counselor will:

1. Meet with the student to assess to the extent possible whether the student or the student's family is experiencing hardships, barriers or other circumstances with which the counselor could assist.
2. Make repeated attempts to contact the parents/guardians to notify them of the lunch charges, discuss the situation and any other concerns the counselor may have after meeting with the student and resolve the situation.
3. Encourage the parents/guardians to submit the free and reduced-price meals application and inquire about any assistance that might be needed to complete the application.
4. Provide other resources as applicable.

Notifications to Parents/Guardians

The district will provide the following notifications to parents/guardians:

1. The district will provide timely notification to parents/guardians when account balances run low (when applicable) and each time their student charges a meal.
2. The district will invoice parents/guardians for unpaid meal charges during the district's monthly billing cycle, in addition to providing notification of outstanding balances by other means.
3. The district will turn over unpaid meal charge balances to a collection agency when the superintendent or designee determines such action is in the best interest of the district.
4. District employees are mandated by the state of Missouri to report any instances of suspected abuse or neglect to the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services. District personnel will report to the CD any instance where a student's arrival at school with no provision for food leads to a reasonable cause to suspect neglect.

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Note: The reader is encouraged to review policies and/or forms for related information in this administrative area.

Implemented: 06/19/2014

Cole County R-I School District, Russellville, Missouri