

## MEAL CHARGES

In accordance with state and federal law, the Treynor 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**

Students have use of a meal account. When the balance reaches \$0.00 a student no longer charge *a la carte* items until the negative account balance is paid. Families may add money to student accounts by paying at the school office with cash or check, or by electronic payment options using Pay Schools.

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 district will strive to provide a meal to students with a negative balance and work with parents and guardians through this policy to collect outstanding debt.

### **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 receive a notice by e-mail or a notice to the student when their balance reaches \$5.00. Whenever an account balance remains below \$5.00, the family will receive a daily notice pertaining to the low or negative balance. Once the negative balance reaches \$100.00, families will be notified by e-mail and a letter mailed to the home. Negative balances of more than \$300.00, not paid prior to the end of the school year, will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Families may elect to set up a payment plan with the school. Other options may include collection agencies, small claims courts, or any other legal method permitted by law.

### **Unpaid Student Meals Account**

The district will establish an unpaid student meals account in a school nutrition fund. Funds from private sources and funds from the district flexibility account may be deposited into the unpaid school meals account in accordance with law. Funds deposited into this account shall be used only to pay individual student meal debt.

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**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.

Legal Reference: 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 *et seq.*  
7 C.F.R. §§ 210 *et seq.*  
U.S. Dep't of Agric., SP 46-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policies (2016).  
U.S. Dep't of Agric., SP 47-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Clarification on Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments (2016).  
U.S. Dep't of Agric., SP 57-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&A (2016).  
Iowa Code 283A.  
281 I.A.C. 58.

Cross Reference: 711.1 School Food Program  
711.2 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility  
711.3 Vending Machine

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