

Policy 710.04: Meal Charges

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 06/08/2017 | Last Revised Date: 08/16/2023 | Last Reviewed Date: 08/16/2023

In accordance with state and federal law, the Nodaway Valley CSD 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. À la carte items cannot be charged if there is no money in the account. Families may send a check to any school in the district to put money in their meal account or make a deposit online using a secure online payment system.

Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Schools are encouraged to provide a reimbursable meal to students with outstanding meal charge debt. If an alternate meal is provided, the meal must be the same meal presented in the same manner to any student requesting an alternate meal.

Employees may use a charge account for meals but may charge no more than \$-25.00 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. Parents can view their student's account through the JMC or by contacting the Food Service Department at 641-743-6141. Families will be notified when their meal account reaches \$10.00. Families will be notified through automated emails, notes in student bags and letters sent by mail. Negative balances of more than -\$25.00, not paid prior to the end of the school year will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

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