

Series 700 – Noninstructional and Business Services

Policy Title: MEAL CHARGES

Policy Code No. 710.4

In accordance with state and federal law, the Newton 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

Families

Students have use of a meal account. When the family account balance reaches a negative \$200.00, a Food Service representative will contact the family and discuss options available for their student. A student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items until the negative account balance is positive. Families may add money to student accounts in the following ways: online payment via district website using a credit card, pay at the school office, or pay the Food Service cashier.

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

Employees

Employees may use a charge account for meals, but may charge no more than \$200.00 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, an employee shall not be allowed to charge further meals until the negative account balance is paid in full.

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.

Negative balances of more than \$100.00 will be turned over to the Food Service Supervisor and secretaries for personal phone calls.

Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance through the following methods: automated email system, personal phone calls, letters sent home.

Options after this may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

Negative balances not paid prior to the end of the school year will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collections or small claims court filings.

Under no circumstances will a student be denied a meal.

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;

Series 700 – Noninstructional and Business Services

- 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.

Date of Adoption 07/24/2017
Review Date 06/08/2020
Revision Date 06/08/2020

Legal Ref.: 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 Ref.: 710.1 School Food Program
 710.2 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility
 710.3 Vending Machine