

MEAL CHARGES

In accordance with state and federal law, the Fairfield 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.

Elementary Level: A student may charge no more than \$15.00 to this account.

When an account reaches this limit, a student will not be allowed to charge further meals or ala carte options. An alternate meal will be provided at a minimal charge for up to 15 days per school year.

Middle School Level: A student may charge no more than \$10 to this account.

When an account reaches a negative balance, purchasing of ala carte items will not be allowed. When an account reaches the balance limit, a student will not be allowed to charge further meals. An alternate meal will be provided at a minimal charge for up to 15 days per school year.

High School Level: A student may charge no more than \$5 to this account.

When an account reached a negative balance, purchasing of ala carte items will not be allowed. When the account reaches the negative balance limit, a student will not be allowed to charge further meals. No alternate meal will be provided at the high school level.

Families may add money to a student's account via online payments through Campus Portal, send money with the student to the building secretary for deposit to their meal account, or by sending or taking money to the ACT Office at 403 S 20th St, Fairfield, IA 52556.

Students who qualify for free meals will never 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 by depositing cash in the office by 9 am on the day of service.

Employees have use of a meal account, but will not be allowed to charge any amount.

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 will be notified once the student account reaches a low or negative balance. Families will be notified via email, automated and/or personal call, text messaging or letters home. Negative balances of more than \$15.00, 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.

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Communication of the Policy

The policy and supporting information regarding meal charges will 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: 710.1 School Food Program
710.2 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility
710.3 Vending Machine

Approved: June 19, 2017

Reviewed:

Revised: June 19, 2017