

### 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:** When an account reaches the \$15 limit, a student will not be allowed to charge further meals or ala carte options. An alternate meal will be provided for up to 15 days per school year.

**High School Level:** When an account reaches a negative balance, purchasing of ala carte items will not be allowed. When the account reaches the \$15 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

MEAL CHARGES

**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 , July 20, 2018

Reviewed: June 18, 2018

Revised: June 19, 2017, July 20, 2018 .