



Book	Policy Manual
Section	800 Operations
Title	Lunch Accounts/Unpaid Meals
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### **Purpose**

Each year, students forget, lose, and misuse their lunch money. For this reason, the Board adopts this policy to govern situations when students do not have lunch money or when their lunch accounts have insufficient funds.

### **Definition**

For purposes of this policy, the term **lunch account** means all forms of exchange, including money, debit cards or coins.

### **Authority**

The district shall permit a student in kindergarten through grade 12 to incur reasonable charges for lunches, and the parent/guardian shall be contacted for payment.

Reasonable charges shall not exceed twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per student for each school year.

Unpaid lunch charges in excess of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for a student shall result in the school withholding the **quarterly** report card as well as the **graduation diploma** until the charges are paid in full. Unpaid lunch charges shall accumulate from year to year.

### **Guidelines**

The district annually shall inform the student and parent/guardian in writing of the district's policy regarding lunch accounts. This policy shall be included with the district's annual notification literature to parents. This policy shall also be placed on the district's website.

The district recognizes all children must receive balanced nutrition to stay focused during the school day. The district also recognizes the importance to minimize identification of children with insufficient funds to pay for school meals. No replacement lunches will be given. All students regardless of lunch account delinquencies will be provided with the available reimbursable meal, but will continue to be charged for such meal. The district will continue to claim state/federal reimbursement on said meals, the student's lunch account will continue to be charged for said meal.

The charging of snack foods or additional meal items will not be permitted.

The Food Service Manager shall maintain a list of students who overdraw accounts in the current school year. This list should be reviewed weekly and provide copies to both the business office and the building principal.

**Parents/Guardians will receive reminder letters every two (2) weeks to fund their student lunch accounts to avoid an overdraft.** Parents/Guardians of students with accounts overdrawn by twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) will receive an initial letter from the Food Service Manager. The letter should remind the parents/guardians of the following:

1. Reminder of the withholding of report cards and graduation diplomas until unpaid lunch charges are paid in full.
2. Reminder the district will provide the child with a reimbursable lunch but charges will continue to be incurred on the student's lunch account.
3. Reminder to defray the additional charges, that parent can provide a bagged lunch at their discretion.
4. Reminder to contact the Business Office regarding an application for free/reduced lunch income guidelines.
5. Reminder to contact the Food Service Manager to make payment arrangements on the meal account.

Copies of the letter should be maintained by the Food Service Manager and the business office for official records. If no response, the Food Service Manager will follow up with the parent/guardian to discuss the account and advise the parent/guardian of the potential to make payment arrangements and/or information regarding who to contact for a free/reduced lunch application, if eligible. After sixty (60) days past due with no payments posted to account, the Food Service office will notify the business office for follow-up letter. A log should be maintained listing time and date of the call for official records.

### Unpaid Meal Charges

#### *Delinquent Debt:*

1. Unpaid meal charges are designated as delinquent debt when payment is overdue
2. The debt remains classified as delinquent as long as it is considered collectable and efforts are being made to collect it.
3. Delinquent debt remains on accounting documents until it is either collected or is determined to be bad debt (see below).
  - a. Delinquent debt is recorded as an asset.
4. Delinquent debt may be carried over at the end of the school year as delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the new school year.
5. Reasonable efforts must be made to collect unpaid meal delinquent debt.
  - a. These efforts can be paid for from the nonprofit school food service account.
6. Determine if the benefits of potential collection outweigh the costs which would be incurred to collect the amount owed.
  - a. The district may turn over a student's account to the magistrate for collection. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for Delinquent Debt as well as any and all fees assigned by the magistrate for the collection of the monies due.

#### *Bad Debt:*

1. Bad debt is defined as debt which has been determined to be uncollectable.
2. Bad debt must be written off as operating losses.
  - a. May not be absorbed or paid for from the nonprofit school food service account.
  - b. Funds may come from the general fund, school or community organizations or any non-Federal source.
  - c. Includes related collection costs or legal costs.
3. Records of bad debt must be maintained in accordance with the record retention requirements in 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17) and 7 CFR 210.15(b).[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

Legal

[1. 7 CFR 210.15](#)

[2. 7 CFR 210.9](#)