



Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Food and Nutrition Services department.

The goals of this standard of practice are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts
- To establish policies that are age appropriate
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments, and to promote self-responsibility of the student
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges

Procedures

If a student does not have money to purchase their meal the following steps will be taken:

- Students will be able to charge one (1) reimbursable meal to their account.
 - Only meals will be charged – no a la carte items will be charged.
- Once their account has incurred a negative balance equal to one (1) reimbursable meal, the student will be given an approved alternate meal until this balance is paid down. The alternate meal will be 8oz of milk, cheese sandwich on a whole grain roll and their choice of fruit and/or vegetables.
- Parents are made aware of their child's negative account balance by:
 - Discreetly cafeteria staff will remind students regarding their negative meal account when their meals are charged to their account.
 - Weekly emails sent to the email on the student's account.
 - Weekly automated phone calls to households.
 - Food and Nutrition Services office would contact parents by phone.

Payments to Food and Nutrition Services:

- Parents are encourage to make payments through our online payment company e~Funds for Schools.
 - <http://capistrano.healtheliving.net/> > click on Meal Payment > Online Meal Payment
 - e~Funds for Schools allows parents to pay online and to monitor the balance in their child's account.
- Parents may pay by cash, check or credit card using our prepaid meal form
 - <http://capistrano.healtheliving.net/> > click on Meal Payment > Methods of Payment
- Parents may pay by cash, but it is not recommend the students pay their accounts with cash in the lunch line.

Procedures

Free or Reduced Meal Program:

- If a household is unable to pay for their child's meal, they are strongly encouraged to apply for free and/or reduced meals.
- Applications are accepted at any time throughout the year.
 - Parents are encouraged to apply online at <http://capistrano.healtheliving.net/>. Click on Meal Applications. Online applications are processed within 24 hours.
 - Parents can also apply by completing a paper application. Paper applications take up to 10 school days, once obtained by Food and Nutrition Services, to process.
 - Households will be held accountable for any charges incurred until the application is approved. Application result letters are mailed to each household.

Policy Communication:

- Families will receive a written copy of the Unpaid Meal Charge Policy at the beginning of each school year, or when the family transfers to the District.
- School Administration will receive a written copy of the Unpaid Meal Charge Policy at the beginning of each school year.
- Food and Nutrition Services staff will receive training and review of the policy at the beginning of year meeting. All new hires will receive training during their new hire orientation.

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