

NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Series 700

Policy Title Meal Charges

Code No. 710.4

Page 1 of 2

In accordance with state and federal law, the George-Little Rock 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 and staff have the use of a meal account. They may deposit money into their school meal account daily, weekly, monthly or by semester. All students and staff are assigned an account number. The student or staff member will key in their personal account number on a keypad and a school employee will monitor the computer to assure that the correct account is charged.

When the balance reaches zero, a student may charge no more than \$37.50 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, a student shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative balance is paid. Accounts with any negative balances, will not be allowed any second or extra options.

Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt shall be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. Schools are encouraged to provide a reimbursable meal to students with outstanding meal charge debt. If an alternate meal is provided, the meal must be the same meal presented in the same manner to any student requesting an alternate meal.

Employees may charge on their account for meals but may charge no more than \$35.00 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, an employee shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative balance is paid.

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 the student's parent or guardian to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Parents or guardians will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the student owes five meals or more. Parents or guardians will be notified by the JMC automated e-mail and calling system. Negative balances of more than \$37.50, will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. A formal letter will be sent at this time along with an application for free and reduced meals. If not resolved with the letter, a meeting with the parent will be scheduled and a resolution will be determined and if no resolution is made, other options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law to collect the unpaid debt.

Unpaid Student Meals Account

The district will establish an unpaid student meals account in a school nutrition fund. Funds from private sources and funds from the district flexibility account may be deposited into the unpaid school meals account in accordance with law. Funds deposited into this account shall be used only to pay individual student meal debt.

Limited funds may be available to assist with food service accounts dependent upon donations. Please complete the Food Service Meal Fund Assistance Form to be considered for the funds. Requests will be reviewed and you will be notified regarding the request.

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;
- 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.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop an administrative process for implementing 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.

Cross Reference: 281 I.A.C. 58.
710.1 School Food Program
710.2 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility
710.3 Vending Machine

