

## MEAL CHARGES

In accordance with state and federal law, the Albert City-Truesdale school board 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. When the balance reaches \$0.00 a student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items until the account balance is above \$0.00. Families may add money to student accounts by paying at the school office.

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.

Employees may use a charge account for meals, but may charge no more than \$25.00 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 account 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 families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Families will be notified by email and/or letters sent home. Negative balances of more than \$100.00, not paid prior to end of quarter 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.

### **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 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. DEPT OF AGRIC., SP 46-2016, UNPAID MEAL CHARGES: LOCAL MEAL CHARGE POLICIES (2016).  
 U.S. DEPT OF AGRIC., SP 47-2016, UNPAID MEAL CHARGES: CLARIFICATION ON COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL PAYMENTS (2016)  
 U.S. DEPT 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