

## **UNPAID STUDENT MEAL DEBT**

The National School Lunch Program is an integral part of the total school program and will be governed by the same controls as any other division of the school program.

The superintendent or designee shall be in overall charge of the program for the district. Each building principal shall be responsible for the general conduct and control of students using the cafeteria. The Food Service Director and/or the Coordinator of Business Services will be responsible for fiscal operation of the program as well as for state and federal accounting and reporting.

The food service program will be operated on a non-profit basis and will comply with all rules and regulations pertaining to health, sanitation, internal accounting procedures, and service of foods. The district will meet state and federal requirements necessary for participation in the National School Lunch Program.

Free and reduced meals will be available to families with qualifying incomes. Students will also be permitted to bring their lunch from home and to purchase beverages to supplement home-prepared lunches.

Receipts from the food services program will be used only to pay regular food services operating costs. Board policy DFB/KF details outside or community use of school kitchens.

The district expects that parents take financial responsibility for their student's meals and has adopted these procedures for collection of payment, which include, but are not limited to:

- Payment is expected in advance of the students eating each day and parents are expected to maintain a positive meal balance throughout the year.
- Below zero balances may be communicated to parents by the following medias: note sent home with student, preferred contact media in our student information system and/or automated recording through school announcement system by phone. If negative balance grows to \$10.00 the school principal will contact the parents directly to arrange for payment.
- If the child continues to arrive at the school without a packed lunch, or funds to purchase meals, the case will be considered for referral to the Department of Family Services.
- Refunds for families withdrawing from the district may be processed through the office by filling out a voucher form. The request will be processed and paid after the next regular school board meeting and approval of bills. Graduating seniors may transfer leftover lunch balances to siblings or request a refund through the procedure listed above.

All students will receive a hot lunch if they have money in hand to pay for the lunch without regard to whether or not they have a charge balance. A la carte items may not be charged.

Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be provided a reimbursable meal, even if the student owes money.

While the school could deny a meal to a student who pays full price and who does not provide the payment for that meal, the initial procedure will be as set forth above.

Parents will be responsible for paying for student's meals and any charges incurred prior to submission and approval of an application for free and reduced lunch (and after the Federal Guideline carryover period, if applicable). A new application must be submitted each school year. Applications may be sent home at the beginning of each school year, are posted on the district website at [www.pcsd1.org](http://www.pcsd1.org) under the Food Services tab, they are also available in each school's main office and at the District administration office. Meal benefits may be applied for anytime during the school year. Assistance with filling out an application may be obtained by contacting the District office.

All building administrators will be responsible for collection of any unpaid lunch balances at their buildings on or before the last day of school. Once it is determined that a delinquent account is not collectible, it shall be considered as a bad debt and treated as an operating loss, which cannot be absorbed by the non-profit food service account.

Park County School District No. 1 may, if it is unable to collect the delinquent meal charge, turn the matter over to a collection agency to pursue collection and/or refuse to award the student credit for a course that has been successfully completed until the unpaid meal charge is paid in accordance with W.S. 21-4-308. If it is determined after six (6) months of *effort* to collect a delinquent account that it will not be paid, the district may consider it a bad debt and treat it as an operating loss. Documentation of collection *efforts* shall be maintained.

The district is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate in the National School Lunch Program. Parents of a student with a negative balance may contact the Food Services Director for information and support in providing their child with a healthy, quality-school lunch.

The district will provide a copy of this policy to all households at the beginning of each school year and to transfer students.

ADOPTED: 4/12/2022

Park County School District #1, Wyoming