

## **Unpaid Meal Charge Policy Pershing County School District**

### **I. PURPOSE OF POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. There is a fine balance that needs to be attained between the solvency of the food service program and the nutritional needs of students. The goals of this policy are:

- To ensure that all students have a healthy meal and that no child goes hungry.
- To treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive and clear communication among staff, administrators, teachers, students, and parents/guardians.
- To establish fair and consistent practices that can be used throughout the school district.
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
- To establish a consistent practice regarding charges and collection of charges.

### **II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Food Service Department: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying The parents/guardians and District of outstanding balance on a regular basis.

School District: Responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian with written reminder once the student has reached a negative balance of \$10.00.

Parent/Guardian: To monitor student's account balance using the PowerSchool software, within which a parent can choose to be automatically notified via email when the account balance is low. To pay student's meal costs via cash, check, or money order prior to meal being served.

### **III. ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY**

1. All students Pre-K-12 will be allowed to charge a maximum of \$10.00 at a given time.
  - a. These meals will be the reimbursable meal as stated on the menu.
  - b. Once the account exceeds a balance of negative \$30.00 the student will be offered an alternative meal – Sample: Cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit, milk (subject to dietary restrictions).
  - c. Student will not be eligible for the standard menu until the balance is under \$30.00.
2. The alternative meal will be charged in the register as a full-pay meal as it meets the definition of a reimbursable meal.

3. Each day the account is in alternative meal status, the student will be directed to the school office to contact the parent/guardian to notify them of the account status and the Food Service Director will mail a written notification that indicates the availability of free & reduced meals if qualifications are met.
4. The Food Service Director will notify the cooks at each school about the students in alternative meal status on a daily basis.
5. If the parent/guardian applies for free meal status, the balance owed will still need to be paid in full. If a payment arrangement is needed, parent/guardian should be directed to the District Office to make such arrangement.
6. In the second week of May, the Food Service Director shall mail written notices of balance due in full by end of the school year.
7. All charges not paid before the end of the school year will be carried into the next year.
8. School principals may establish a student assistance fund to assist students with large balances.
9. This policy shall be published in the local newspaper annually and added to student handbooks.
10. This policy is available in English and Spanish on the Pershing County School District website at [www.pershing.k12.nv.us](http://www.pershing.k12.nv.us).

#### **IV. COLLECTION OF DEBT**

1. When a student's balance drops to \$5.00, the Food Service Manager will send a generic notice home with the student.
2. When a student's balance drops below zero, the Food Service Manager will send another generic notice home with the student.
3. When a student's balance reaches \$10.00 in the negative, the Food Service Manager will call the parent/guardian and mail a letter to the parent/ guardian reminding them that payment is due.
4. When a student's balance reaches \$30.00 in the negative, the Food Service Manager will call the parent/guardian and mail a letter to the parent or guardian notifying them that payment is due and that the student will receive an alternative meal until the balance is below \$30.00. The letter will also notify parent/guardian that the matter will be turned over to the district office for submission to small claims court.
5. When a student's balance reaches \$50.00 in the negative, the Superintendent of Schools will send a letter to parent/guardian notifying them that a payment arrangement can be made and a date for which the matter will be filed in small claims court.
6. When a student's balance reaches \$75.00 in the negative, the Superintendent of Schools will file the matter in small claims in an effort to collect the debt.
7. If, after one year of the filing of a judgment, the debt remains outstanding, it will be paid in full from of the District's general fund, which is funded through state and local taxes.