

ESCONDIDO UNION HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT
STUDENT NUTRITION SERVICES
MEAL CHARGE POLICY

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the Escondido Union High School District (EUHSD). The standard practice outlined in this policy is meant to explain how EUHSD will handle situations where students eligible to receive paid meals do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of their meal at the time of service. While unpaid meal charges place a financial burden on the Student Nutrition Department (SNS), a self-sufficient program, the standard practice at EUHSD will never shame children who do not have the money to pay for a meal or whose family has unpaid meal debt. Note: EUHSD SNS Department waives reduced price meal fee. Reduced price eligibility category receives meals at no cost.

II. Scope of Responsibility

The Student Nutrition Services (SNS) Department is responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying parent/guardian of unpaid meal balances.

The Parent/Guardian is responsible for payment. Notification of low or negative balances will be sent to parents/guardians every two weeks during the school year. The notification includes a phone call, email and text message. If financial hardship is disclosed, the Student Nutrition Department will encourage the family to apply for meal benefits.

School Site Administration is responsible for investigating when a student is consistently without money for meals to ensure that all available resources will be offered to the family.

III. Administration

Families are encouraged to apply for free/reduced price meal benefit. Any family that falls into a negative balance will receive notification encouraging them to apply for free/reduced price meal benefits. Before sending notification to parents/guardians regarding a negative balance, SNS will attempt to directly certify the student for free/reduced price meals. If SNS cannot directly certify the student or find their names on a homeless, migrant, runaway or foster list from the liaison(s) or the foster list available on CALPADS then SNS shall provide the household with a meal application.

Families are encouraged to pre-pay for meals. Prepayment is available online at www.ezschoollpay.com or via cash/check payment at the school cafeteria. All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale (cash register) systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student. Parents/Guardians may view account activity by setting up an online account or by contacting the SNS Department.

Families will be notified of the Unpaid Meal Charge Policy in writing before the school year begins and when a new student transfers into the District. This policy will be posted on the Student Nutrition Services website.

Students who do not qualify for a free/reduced price meals will pay for meals at the published respective breakfast and lunch meal prices.

Students whose parent/guardian has unpaid meal charges will not be shamed, treated differently, or denied a reimbursable meal of the student's choice because the pupil's parent/guardian has unpaid meal fees. A student who has unpaid meal charges will be served a reimbursable meal of their choice throughout the school year regardless of the level of debt incurred by the household.

Student accounts with a positive balance at the end of the school year will be carried over to the next school year.

Refunds of any money remaining on a student account must be requested in writing. Parents/guardians of graduating students or transferring students may request to have any balance transferred to a sibling's account with a written request. Email is an acceptable written request. Unclaimed funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the EUHSD.

Unrecovered debt refers to meal charges that have not been paid by the parent/guardian during the fiscal year. Action to recover debt will only be directed to the parent/guardian of the student. The unrecovered debt becomes bad debt if the debt is not collected by the end of the fiscal year. Bad debt must be covered by nonfederal funding sources as bad debts are an unallowable cost to federal programs. On June 30th of the current fiscal year, all bad debt becomes the property of EUHSD and a transfer from the General Fund will be made to the Cafeteria Fund to zero out negative balances.

Board Approved: 1/14/20