

**POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

**Originator:** Director of Food and Nutrition

**Issue No:** 2

**Date:** 2/10/15

**Page:** 1 of 2

**Reference:** 2 CFR 225; 7 CFR 245.6 (d)

**ARTICLE: 6.0 BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES**

**6.60 FOOD AND NUTRITION**

**6.61 FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**

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**SECTION 6.61.2 Charging Meals in School**

**Purpose/Goals:** To establish consistent meal charging and collection procedures districtwide. The goals of this procedure are:

- To maintain a positive experience for students during meal service.
- To treat all students with dignity and respect.
- To establish practices which are age-appropriate.
- To minimize meal charges and encourage parents to pre-pay for all meals.
- To promote parents' responsibility for meal payments and self-responsibility of the student.

Payment in advance for meals enables the District to achieve these goals.

**Emergency Meal Service:** The Board of Education acknowledges that on occasion, students may forget or lose meal money. In such cases, the child's statement of need shall be accepted and food will be made available based upon on a site administrative decision. Annually, the principal, or designee, in cooperation with a Food and Nutrition representative, shall develop procedures to provide meals to students without lunch money.

**Evaluate Individual Circumstances:** When a student repeatedly comes to school without a meal from home or money to participate in the school meal program, school administrators should consider if circumstances in the home warrant contacting social workers or Child Protective Services. Frequent requests may indicate the family's need for free or reduced-price meals. If for any reason, parents decline to complete an eligibility application and the principal is aware that the student is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the principal may complete an application on behalf of the student. Written justification must be made on the application as to the reason the student should be receiving free or reduced-price meals. (7 CFR 245.6 (d))

**Pre-paid Meal System:** The school meal accounting system is a pre-paid system. Parents or guardians must deposit money into their child's account before meals are served. Payments can be made daily, weekly, monthly, or annually. In addition to using cash and checks, parents can also pay online with their credit/debit cards. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that money is in the account or a home prepared meal is sent to school with their child.

**Repayment for Meal Charges and Bad Checks:** Federal guidelines prohibit the Food and Nutrition operation from writing off bad debts as a result of charged meals. Every effort will be made to collect for unpaid meals. Unpaid meal charges will result in the following:

- A verbal reminder to student
- A weekly report sent to the principal
- A Pre-Paid Envelope reminder sent home with student
- Automated telephone call home and an email will be sent to the parent
- In case of significant delinquent payments, a letter will be sent home from the Food and Nutrition Department

**Program limitations:** Students with negative account balances can only purchase regular breakfast and lunch meals. A la carte (extra) items cannot be charged. Monies received from students with negative account balances must first be used to satisfy the negative balance. No change will be given back to students with negative account balances and any extra monies will be deposited into the student's account.

All meals eaten before a Free and Reduced-Price application is processed and approved are the responsibility of the parent/guardian and must be paid for as required by law.

At the end of the school year, the amount of uncollected meal charges must be paid to the Food and Nutrition fund/account from some other funding source. Uncollected meal charges should be handled the same as other school debt in accordance with Administrative Procedures 6.84.1, Recover of Lost, Damaged, or Vandalized Property.