



Meal Charge Policy

I. Purpose/Policy

The goal of the Westside Union School District Child Nutrition Department is to provide student access to healthy meals each school day.

However, unpaid charges place a financial strain on our Child Nutrition Department and the Westside Union School District. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

The goals of this policy are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts. All students will receive the same meal regardless of account balance status.
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.

II. Scope of Responsibility

- **The Child Nutrition Department** is responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the student's parent/guardian of money owed.
- **The School Principal** is responsible for working with the Child Nutrition Department in ensuring Free and Reduced Meal Applications are obtained for students exhibiting financial hardships.
- **The School District** is responsible for supporting the Child Nutrition Department in collection of debt and reconciliation of accounts.
- **The Parent/Guardian** is responsible for completing a meal application and or making regular meal payments for their student's meals.

III. Administration

- Families are encouraged to apply for Free and Reduced priced meal benefits. Applications are available on-line at www.WUSDnutrition.com and by paper application at each school site. Applications may be submitted at any point during the school year.
- Students/Parents/Guardians may pay for meals in advance via www.MyPaymentsPlus.com or

with a check payable to WUSD Nutrition. Further details are available on our webpage at www.WUSDnutrition.com. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds at the end of the school year for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year or transferred to another Westside District school.

- Students and their parents/guardians shall be notified whenever their account has a low or negative balance. Whenever a student's account has an unpaid balance of \$25 or more, parents/guardians shall be notified in writing that full payment is due within seven school days from the date of the notice. Notification will be achieved by automated phone message, written letter, or electronic e-mail.
- No charges are allowed for student a la carte items such as milk, juice and water.
- The Superintendent or designee may enter into a repayment plan with a student's parents/guardians for payment of the student's unpaid meal charge balance over a period of time.
- Refunds for withdrawn, and graduating students are available with a written or e-mailed request for a refund of any money remaining in their account. Funds can also be transferred to a sibling's account with a written request.
- Families will be notified of the school Meal Charge Policy in writing before the school year begins and with each new transfer student. This policy will also be posted on the Child Nutrition Website.