

Lemmon School District Meal Charge Policy

1. Federal Requirement

The purpose of this policy is to address the need for school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which would include, if applicable, the availability of alternate meals. Because all students in participating schools may receive reimbursable school meals, all SFAs must have a policy in place for children who are participating at the reduced price or paid rate, but either do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. Such a policy ensures that school food service professionals, school administrators, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations in these situations.

You can find more information about this US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requirement at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges>.

2. Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of this standard of practice are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts;
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, student and parent or guardian to the maximum extent; or
- To establish policies that are age appropriate;
- To encourage parent or guardian to assume responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student; and
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.

3. Scope of Responsibility:

- The Elementary Secretary, the Administrative Assistant and the Business Manager – Responsible for the maintaining of charge records and notifying the student's parent or guardian.
- The parent or guardian – Responsible for immediate payment and keeping the account current.

4. Administration:

- The parents or guardian of the students are encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits. Applications are available at the Elementary office, the Business Office or on the Lemmon School District website under the Food Services tab. www.Lemmon.k12.sd.us
- Families are required to pre-pay for the meals. Payments made are applied to the family account and the funds will be used for both the breakfast and lunches eaten by the students. Payments can be made by stopping at the elementary office or the high school office or by mailing payment to the Lemmon School at 209 Third Street West, Lemmon, SD 57638
- Credit card payments are also accepted by contacting the high school office at 605-374-3762.
- Families will be notified of the school Unpaid Meal Charge Policy and the policy will also be posted on the Lemmon School District website.

5. K – 12 Students:

The food service lunch accounts are set up on a family basis. Therefore, if a family account balance is at zero or below, all students in grades K – 12 listed on the family account are affected by the consequences listed in the policy.

- Reminders for payment are e-mailed to the parent or guardian via the Wordware lunch program once the family balance falls below \$13.00. When a family balance receives a notice, payment is required immediately.
- If the family balance falls below zero for 4 school days:
 - The account will be considered as delinquent. The parents or guardian will be required to provide immediate payment or set up a payment plan.
 - If the parents or guardian have not already done so, application for the free and reduced price meal benefits will need to be submitted. The Elementary secretary will determine according to federally established guidelines whether or not the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals. If the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals, they are still obligated to pay the delinquent balance due. The application cannot be back dated.
- If the family balance is below zero for more than 4 school days:
 - The students will be denied further credit and will not be able to eat the hot breakfast or lunch unless payment is made current on the family account or payment for that individual meal is made prior to eating.
 - An alternate cold meal for lunch will be provided upon request.
 - If payment of the account balance in full and pre-payment made for future meals is not made, an approved payment plan must be established.
 - If the parents or guardian have not already done so, application for the free and reduced price meal benefits will need to be submitted. The Elementary secretary will determine according to federally established guidelines whether or not the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals. If the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals, they are still obligated to pay the delinquent balance due. The application cannot be back dated.

6. Alternate Meals:

An alternate meal will not be offered for breakfast. For lunch, the students will discreetly be given a tray with the alternate cold lunch during the time the regular hot meal is denied. The students of a family with a delinquent balance who have received an alternate meal for 5 consecutive days and the family balance is still below zero will be denied further alternate meals. At this point, the parents or guardian will be responsible for providing a breakfast and lunch meal for their students.

7. Other:

- The administration has the authority to begin collection proceedings for any severely delinquent account and or establish other consequences for unpaid balances on an individual case basis.
- All lunch balances at the end of the school year are due no later than June 1st.

Adopted: September 19, 2017