



Book	Policies
Section	05000 Students
Title	Child Nutrition Program Financial Rights and Responsibilities
Number	5049
Status	Active

A. Purpose and Philosophy

1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that schools operate a food service program that provides students with access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn.
2. To explain how the District and its schools will notify parents regarding payment methods and money owed for student meals.

B. Policy

1. The District and its schools follow federal and state laws and guidelines for the Child Nutrition Program.
2. The child nutrition program will not discriminate against, nor physically segregate, any student because of his or her inability to pay the full price of a meal or milk. Schools must ensure that students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals, or whose meal accounts have a low balance or are delinquent, are not easily identifiable or subject to ridicule, or embarrassment.

C. Definitions

1. "Collection Efforts" is defined as the means that the District uses to collect delinquent lunch balances including, but not limited to, contacts to parents by phone, mail, or other efforts by the school or by a collection agency.
2. "Delinquent Account" means a student meal account that does not have adequate funds to cover meal charges.
3. "Free Meal" means a meal served to students whose parents have qualified, based on federal standards requiring income review and documentation, for free meals, which receive the highest federal rate of reimbursement.
4. "Parent" means a student's parent, legal guardian, or person acting as the parent for school purposes.
5. "Paid Meal" means a meal served to students whose parents have not qualified for free/reduced-price meals.
6. "Reduced Meal" means a meal served to students whose parents have qualified, based on federal standards requiring income review and documentation, for reduced-price but not free meals.

D. References

1. United States Code: 942 U.S.C. 1779, 10(1), 10(b))
2. Utah State Board of Education Rule: R277-720

E. Procedures

1. Free/Reduced Price Application Forms

- a. District and/or Schools shall provide applications and /or links to online applications for free/reduced-price meals to parents.
 1. District and Schools will provide paper applications for parents who do not have access to online forms.
- b. Students qualifying for the Special Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Family Employment Program (FEP) also qualify for meals at no charge, once the school receives notice of qualification, and parents do not have to complete or submit a free/reduced-price form.
- c. Schools will send households an email/letter informing parents of a student's eligibility status.
 1. Parents should contact Child Nutrition at the district office if the family has not received such a letter before school starts.

2. Eligibility Verification and Payment Price

- a. Schools must verify at some point in each student's meal service, that the meal is reimbursable or non-reimbursable.
 1. Students/families qualifying for free meals have no payment due from date of approved application.
 2. Students/families qualifying for reduced-price meals are charged no more than the rate set by the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- b. Students/families not qualifying for free/reduced-price meals pay the price determined by the Board of Education.

3. Schools provide parents with several payment options including:

- a. Online payments using debit or credit cards for one or all of their students, allocating funds to individual student accounts.
- b. Mail or hand delivery of checks, money orders, or cash to the school.
 1. Parents should clearly indicate the account(s) to which the funds should be credited.

4. Schools will credit meal payments from parents to students' accounts as soon as reasonably possible.

- a. Schools will apply payments to the purchase of the current day's meal first and the payment of past due accounts second.

5. Delinquent Accounts

- a. Tooele County School District's Food Service Department wants to make sure all students who want a breakfast or lunch receives that meal; we don't want to take food away from any student in the serving line. But we have come across an issue with the delinquent accounts within the district.
- b. Parents are responsible to fund student meal accounts.
- c. The District may send student meal accounts that are in the negative to a collection agency.
- d. The District will make at least two attempts in writing to parents before the negative balance is sent to a collection agency.
- e. Students who are graduating must arrange to pay any delinquent lunch balances in full before participating in graduation ceremonies.
- f. Excessive negative balances in students' accounts necessitate the following new protocols:

TRIGGER FOR ACTION

ACTION

Low Balance

Up to a \$10 negative balance

Lunch Clerk/Cafeteria Manager tells student(s) he/she needs money in his/her account.

Negative Balance

More than \$10 negative balance

Automated phone call from district informing parents of a negative balance.

Negative Balance

More than \$20 negative balance

Lunch Clerk/Cafeteria Manager will send a first notification letter of a negative balance with a link to free/reduced cost application to the student(s) home with payment information signed by the Cafeteria Manager.

Negative Balance

More than \$30 negative balance

Lunch Clerk/Cafeteria Manager will send a second notification letter of a negative balance with a link to free/reduced cost application to the student(s) home with payment information signed by the principal.

Negative Balance

\$40 or more negative balance

Final letter will be mailed home to parents indicating balances greater than \$40. Payment arrangements will need to be made with fifteen business days or the account may be sent to the district's collection agency.