



Book	Policies
Section	05000 Students
Title	Child Nutrition Program Financial Rights and Responsibilities
Code	5049
Status	Active
Adopted	October 8, 2019

#### 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, SMS text messages, email, 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/ 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.
7. "Low Balance" means a student's account is nearing zero dollars (\$0.00) i.e. five (\$5.00) dollars or less is remaining
8. "Negative Balance" means an account is less than zero dollars (\$0.00)
9. "P.O.S." means Point of Service; this is referring to a location where a monetary transaction takes place.
10. "Reimbursable Meal" means a meal consisting of: a. 3 of the 5 offered categories for lunch (Grains, Meat or Meat alternative, fluid milk, fruits, and Veggies) one of those three must be 1/2 cup fruits or vegetables. All five are encouraged for best nutrition. b. two or three of the four items offered categories for breakfast depending on serving size for the meal to qualify for a reimbursable meal.

#### 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.
  - 2. District, Schools and CNP Office will encourage parents to fill out applications via their district provided ASPIRE account.
  - 3. District and CNP office will provide computers for parents who do not have computer access, to pay online and/or to complete an application.
  - 4. District, Schools and CNP Office will provide paper applications for parents who refuse to apply online, upon request.
- 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. Parents are responsible for the confirmation of their student's free/reduced status, they may find this information online in their students ASPIRE account, at their local school or by calling or visiting the Child Nutrition Office.
- c. Schools will send households an email/letter informing parents of a student's eligibility status.
  - 1. Parents should contact the Child Nutrition office if the family has not received such a letter before school starts, or after ten business days of submitting an application.

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.
- c. Debit or credit card, cash, and check payments can be made at the Child Nutrition Office.
  - 1. Parents should clearly indicate the account(s) to which the funds should be credited.
  - 2. Parents should receive a receipt confirming their payment for specific accounts.

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 breakfast or lunch receive that meal; we will not deny nor take away a reimbursable meal away from any student in or after the serving line.
- 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 to notify 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:

**STUDENT TRIGGER FOR ACTION**

**Low Balance**

\$5 or less is remaining

**ACTION**

P.O.S. employee will respectfully notify student they will be needing money soon

Negative Balance  
Less than \$0 negative balance

P.O.S. employee will respectfully notify student during POS processing that their account is low or negative. Once an account is negative, A La Carte items will only be accepted with a cash payment. This action will continue until the balance is brought current.

Negative Balance  
Greater than \$10 negative balance

Automated phone call/email/SMS message will be sent weekly from CNP Office via school messenger informing parents of a negative balance, (this action will continue until the balance is brought current).

Negative Balance Category I  
Greater than \$20 negative balance

CNP Office will email a Category I notification letter to the parent(s) email address listed in students ASPIRE account.

Negative Balance Category II  
Greater than \$30 negative balance

CNP Office will email a Category II notification letter to the parent(s) email address listed in students Aspire account.

Negative Balance Category III  
Greater than \$40 negative balance

CNP Office will mail, via USPS, a Category III letter to the address listed in students ASPIRE account. Payment arrangements will need to be made within fifteen calendar days or the account will be sent to the district's collection agency.

STAFF ACCOUNT TRIGGER FOR ACTION     ACTION

Low Balance  
Up to a \$10 negative balance

P.O.S. employee with respectfully notify staff member during P.O.S. processing that their account is low or negative. Once an account is negative, meals and A La Carte items will only be accepted with a cash payment per purchase. If a staff member does not have cash, they will not be allowed to take a meal and/or A La Carte item. (This action will continue until the balance is brought current).

Negative Balance  
Greater than \$20 negative Balance

Automated phone call/email/SMS message will be sent weekly from the CNP office via school messenger informing staff member of a negative balance, (this action will continue until the balance is brought current).

Negative Balance Category I  
Greater than \$20 negative balance

CNP Office will email a Category I notification letter to staff email in ASPIRE account.

Negative Balance Category II  
Greater than \$30 negative balance

CNP office will email a Category II notification letter to staff email in ASPIRE account.

Negative Balance Category III  
Greater than \$40 negative balance

CNP Office will mail, via USPS, a Category III letter to address on file in staff member's ASPIRE account. Payment arrangements will need to be made within fifteen clendar days or the negative balance on account may be deducted via employee's payroll OR may be sent to the district's collection agency.