

LSR-7 Meal Charge Policy

All students that attend Lee's Summit R-7 are provided with the opportunity to purchase meals at each school cafeteria in accordance with the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program. The following guidelines shall be followed in the instance that a student finds it necessary to charge their meal due to a lack of funds in his/her account.

Parents/guardians are solely responsible for providing their children with meals, either through money to purchase meals at school or by packing a meal from home. If, for any reason a parent/guardian cannot afford to provide a meal for their child, they can apply for Free and Reduced meal benefits. A hard copy application may be printed from our district website at: www.leessummit.schoolnutrition.com. Applications (in most languages) are available. A household may also apply for free and reduced meals online at www.heartlandapp.com.

Students

1. A student may not accumulate more than five (5) unpaid meal charges. When a student has accumulated five (5) meal charges the student may choose an alternative meal.
2. Students may not charge a la carte items. Students are expected to pay for a la carte items prior to or at time of receipt.
3. A student with money in hand will not be denied a meal even if the student has past due charges. Cash may be used to purchase a meal or a la carte items.
4. Students will not be identified, singled out, shamed or punished by the district for the failure of their parents/guardians to pay for or provide meals, and the district will not withhold student records in violation of law.

Alternative Meals

Alternative meals will be on the regular serving line and will be available to all students as an alternative to the regular meal. When a student has reached the charge limit, they may choose an alternate meal.

Interventions

The district will provide the following notifications when a student reaches specific unpaid meal charges:

1. After student accumulates five (5) unpaid meal charges, School Messenger will notify household of negative account balances not more than two times per week.
2. Nutrition Services will provide administration a list of student charges on a weekly basis.

District employees are mandated by the state of Missouri to report any instances of suspected abuse or neglect to the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services. District personnel will report to the CD any instance where a student's arrival at school with no provision for food leads to a reasonable cause to suspect neglect.

Additionally, the district will provide the following interventions via the principal and/or counselor:

1. Meet with the student to assess to the extent possible whether the student or the student's family is experiencing hardships, barriers or other circumstances with which the principal or counselor could assist.
2. Make repeated attempts to contact the parents/guardians to inquire about any assistance that might be needed to complete the free and reduced price meals application, discuss the situation and any other concerns the principal or counselor may have after meeting with the student, provide other resources as applicable and resolve the situation.

Notifications to Parents/Guardians

The district will provide timely notification to parents/guardians when account balances run low (when applicable) and when account balances include unpaid charges. Parents can sign up for free at www.myschoolbucks.com to receive email alerts for low balances.

Debt Collection

Delinquent Debt

Unpaid meal charges will be considered a delinquent debt 90 days after notice that charges are due when no payment or payment plan agreement has been made. Unpaid charges will be considered delinquent as long as the district determines the debt is collectible and efforts to collect the debt are ongoing. The district will make reasonable efforts to collect delinquent debt, including turning over unpaid meal charge balances to a collection agency when the superintendent or designee determines such action is in the best interest of the district. The district's Nonprofit School Food Services Account (NSFSA) funds may be used to cover the costs of reasonable efforts to collect delinquent debt, including costs associated with using a collection agency.

End of Year Negative Balances

By law, Nutrition Services is not allowed to pay for bad debt. Therefore, each school will pay for their student's outstanding meal charges at the end of each year. Parents will be required to re-pay the school when the following year enrollment is conducted.

For the complete Board Policy regarding Meal Charges read EF-AP1