

FOOD SERVICES

Code **EF-R** Issued **10/22**

Student Meal Charge Policy

Purpose

The intent of this policy is to establish consistent district practices for the provision of meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

General statement of policy

Proper nutritional intake is essential for adequate learning to occur. The food service department strives to produce quality meals to students and staff.

General statement

The food service manager and other school personnel will coordinate communications to parents/legal guardians to resolve unpaid balances in meal accounts. These communications will include providing families with information about the free and reduced lunch programs and the programs' application process.

Meal applications are distributed to families in the district prior to the student's first day of classes. Families are encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits anytime during the school year. If household income or size changes, families can apply for meal benefits anytime during the school year.

Payment options

The district offers a variety of methods for parents/legal guardians to fund their students' meal accounts including the following.

- Lunch prepay online service is posted on the food service website at www.dillon3.k12.sc.us.
- Money (cash or check) is accepted for payments by the week, month, or daily.
- Money can be paid in the child's homeroom or in the cafeteria.

Charge accounts

A student may charge up to \$10.00 maximum for grades K through eight and a no-charge policy for grades nine through 12. A student who charges a meal may not charge any á la carte items with insufficient funds.

Notifying family of account status

Parents/Legal guardians will receive weekly written notification given to the child about insufficient funds.

The parent/legal guardian will be notified via phone call by the cafeteria manager or automatic call tree when the household account is at \$10.00 or more by number on file.

Parents/Legal guardians may receive written notification by postal mail if all attempts to collect funds are exhausted.

Food service employees, the food service director, and each building principal will work together to prevent meal charges from accumulating. No student will be denied a meal. Parents/Legal
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guardians are expected to pay all meal charges in full by the last day of the school year. Negative balances that remain will be carried forward to the following school year.

Parents/Legal guardians are encouraged to discuss payment arrangements with the food service manager or director. In establishing the terms of repayment plans, the district will assess each household's particular circumstances.

Communication

At the beginning of each school year, the information contained in this administrative rule and any associated procedures will be shared with administrators, principals, school food service professionals, and other district stakeholders charged with duties related to the school food services program. The **unpaid student meal account policy** will be provided on our website at www.dillon3.k12.sc.us.

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

Issued 8/8/17; Revised 10/11/22

Legal References:

- A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
 - 1. Section 59-63-785 - School meal debt collections and exceptions.