

## **UNPAID STUDENT MEAL DEBT**

Weston County School District No. 7 is committed to ensuring all students have healthy, quality meals to support daily learning and social interactions, while remaining fiscally responsible as a district. To help achieve both demands, we have established a district-wide negative balance procedure. This procedure is intended to notify parents when students need money for lunch accounts; ensure parents are aware of the free and reduced meal programs; and to collect on outstanding debts to the Food Service Program. This procedure follows a multi-step process to allow students every opportunity to continue enjoying the same school lunch program.

The multi-step procedure follows:

**Step one:** If a student's lunch account drops below \$15.00, a weekly notice will be sent home via email or phone call.

**Step two:** If a student reaches a negative balance, the kitchen manager will contact the parent or guardian to remind them of the negative balance.

**Step three:** If a student reaches a negative balance of more than \$20.00, or a family more than \$40.00, the District will contact the parent or guardian to remind them of the negative balance.

**Step four:** If students and their guardians are non-responsive to these notifications or if arrangements are not made the student will be informed that he/she will receive an alternative bag lunch. Students will be re-enrolled in the hot lunch program once the food services director is contacted and balances are addressed, either by being paid in full or a payment plan is implemented or other mutually agreed upon arrangements are made. Students may still have a negative balance during this time so long as they are taking action to rectify their account.

All students will receive a hot lunch if they have money in hand to pay for the lunch without regard to whether or not they have a charge balance.

Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be provided a meal of some type, even if the student owes money.

Schools can deny a meal to a student who pays full price and who does not provide the payment for that meal or provide an alternative sack lunch as set forth above.

Parents will be responsible for paying for student's meals and any charges incurred prior to submission of an application for free and reduced lunch (and after the 30-day carryover period, if applicable).

Once it is determined that a delinquent account is not collectible, it shall be considered as a bad debt and treated as an operating loss, which cannot be absorbed by the non-profit food service account.

The district will provide a copy of this policy to all households at the beginning of each school year and to transfer students.

Weston County School District No.7 may, if it is unable to collect the delinquent meal charge, turn the matter over to a collection agency to pursue collection and/or refuse to award the student credit until the unpaid charge is paid in accordance with W.S. 21-4-308. If it is determined after six (6) months of efforts to collect delinquent accounts that it will not be paid, the district may consider it a bad debt and treat it as an operating loss. Documentation of collection efforts shall be maintained.

The district is committed to ensuring that all students are able to participate in the hot lunch program. Parents of a student with a negative balance may contact the school's food services department for information and support in providing their child with a healthy, quality school lunch.

**NEW POLICY**  
**REVIEW DATE: APRIL 11, 2017**  
**ADOPTION DATE: MAY 10, 2017**

