

## **Tri-City CUSD #1 Meal Charges for Meals Provided by the District**

As per Board Policy 4:130-E, The Building Principal and District staff will work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort to collect all funds due to the District will be made on a regular basis and before the end of the school year. Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board policy 4:45, Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery and the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act (105 ILCS 123/, added by P.A. 100-1092). The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt. When a student's funds are low or there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches.

### **Negative Balances (USDA/National School Lunch Program Schools)**

Student food service accounts are not allowed to be in excess of \$15.50 owed (5 lunches). Students with a negative balance exceeding this limit can have extra meal and/or a-la-carte purchasing privileges restricted.

### **Charging**

While Tri-City Schools strongly discourage lunch charges, we understand that an occasional emergency may be necessary. The following guidelines have been developed to help parents understand the policy and their financial obligations.

1. Students that charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal.
2. If a student owes charges, they will not be able to purchase extra meals or a la carte items.
3. If money is put in the student's account, the charges owed will be paid first.
4. No charging will be allowed the last two weeks of every school year to make certain that no additional debts are accumulated for the remainder of the year.

### **Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balances**

1. The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account falls below \$-10.00 by letters home via US Mail or sent home with the student.
2. Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges and where to go for questions or assistance.
3. If a balance remains outstanding at the end of the year, the district will carry over the outstanding balances paid upon graduation or if the student leaves the district.

### **Assistance to Households**

Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for lunch by sending money or through Skyward.

### **Repayment Options**

Households will have three options to settle any owed balance:

1. Pay the balance in full and bring the current account balance to at least a \$0.00 balance.

2. Request a payment plan to settle any balance owed. Any payment plan should bring balance to at least \$0.00 within 30 days of receipt of balance notice.
3. Apply for Free or Reduced-Price benefits through the Free and Reduced application process.
  - Approval of Free or Reduced-Price meal benefits cannot be backdated.
  - Any balance currently owed is still the responsibility of the household regardless of the approved meal benefit level.
  - Balances owed are not cancelled at the end of the year and will be carried forward from year to year.

Approved by  
Tri-City CUSD #1  
Board of Education  
September 24, 2024