

Alamo Heights Independent School District

Meal Charge Policy

I. PURPOSE/POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the Alamo Heights Independent School District. Pursuant to State and Federal Regulations all Child Nutrition Programs on the NSLP are required to “break even” at the close of each school year. The goals of this policy will ensure the completion of this goal on an annual basis. To that end, this policy is:

- To ensure that all students have a healthy meal and that no child goes hungry.
- To treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive and clear communication among staff, administrators, teachers, students and parent/guardian.
- To establish fair practices that can be used throughout the school district.
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
- To establish a consistent practice regarding charges and collection of charges.

II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Food Service Department:

- Responsible for maintaining charge records
- Notifying the school district and the school of outstanding balances
- Notifying students/parents/guardians of outstanding balances by Phone, Email, Text, and mail.

The School District:

- Assist Child Nutrition with collection of outstanding balances by sending home balance sheets generated by the Food Service Department

The Parent/Guardian:

- Maintain a positive balance in your child’s lunch account
- Apply for meal subsidy to avoid outstanding balances
- Contact the Food Service Department and the School to resolve any issues with your child’s lunch account

III. POLICY and PROCEDURE:

1. All students PK-12 will not be allowed to have a balance less than -\$5.00 on their account at any given time.
2. Only Federally designated reimbursable meals can be charged to an account with funds amounts less than \$0.00 and to -\$5.00.
3. Once the child's account goes below \$5.00 Dollars, the student will be told that their funds are running low, and will be asked to let their parents/guardians know to add more funds to the account to avoid going into the negative.
4. Once the account goes below \$0.00 the student will be told that if they get to -\$5.00 they will receive an "Alternative" meal (see below), if they are on PAID or REDUCED status until the account is in good standing.
5. When the account has reached the -\$5.00 limit, the PAID or REDUCED student will be given a designated menu alternate. Sample: Cheese sandwich, vegetable, fruit, and milk.
6. This meal will be rung in the register as an "Alternative" meal (in order for the district to receive federal reimbursement to at least cover the cost of the meal).
7. The School, Parent/guardian, and Student will be informed of their excessive balance until the account is brought back into good standing. This will be done by Phone, Email, Text, and Correspondence sent home from the Food Nutrition office.
8. No A la Carte or Snack Items will be allowed to be charged to an account with insufficient funds, even if the child offers to pay in cash.
9. When a parent/guardian has applied for free/reduced meal, but before the school has been notified of eligibility, the student will be given an alternative meal.
10. If the parent/guardian application for FREE meal status is approved then the balance owed for unpaid meals shall be forgiven.
11. If the application for REDUCED meal status is approved then the student/parent/guardian is still responsible to pay the full account balance and bring the account into good standing
12. In the middle of May, all charging will be cut off:
 - a. Parents/guardians will be sent a written request for "Payment in Full"
 - b. All charges must be paid before the last day of School each Year.
 - c. Seniors must pay all charges before graduation.

Approved Draft 7/28/15