

# MESA COUNTY VALLEY SD 51 MEAL CHARGE STANDARD PROCEDURES

## **Purpose**

The District is committed to ensuring that all students receive the nutrition they need to engage in active learning during the school day. In accordance with applicable guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), this procedure is intended to serve the purposes of meeting student needs, minimizing the identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals and maintaining the fiscal integrity of the District's school food service account. Meal charge privileges are at the discretion of the District and evaluated on an annual basis.

## **Student Meal Accounts and Meal Charges**

Student meal accounts shall be established by the School Food Authority (SFA). Parents will be encouraged to pre-pay for student meals. Funds may be added to the account with either check or cash payments at the school or through the District's online payment system ([www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com)). Parents may call the Nutrition Services Office at 970-254-5181 to make a payment over the phone. Students may also pay for meals and/or add funds to accounts on the day of service.

If a student has money to purchase a full or reduced priced meal at the time of the meal service, the student must be provided a meal. The student's money may not be used to repay previously unpaid charges if the student intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

Students paying full or reduced price for meals and who do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the costs of the meal at the time of service will be permitted to charge a reimbursable meal. Students will need funds on their account for ala carte or "extra" items, such as milk or additional entrée purchases, excluding elementary ala carte milk purchases. Students at the elementary level will be allowed to charge ala carte milk.

Students with unused credit in their accounts at the point of disenrollment or graduation may request a refund of the credit.

**NOTE:** All adult meals, including employees of D51, are required to be pre-paid or paid in full at the time of purchase.

## **Notification of Low or Insufficient Funds**

Notification of a negative balance on a student meal account will be provided privately to the parent(s) via email, letters, and automated phone call reminders.

When notified of a negative balance on a student account, parents will be reminded of the process for submitting applications for free or reduced price meal benefits. Parents may apply online at any time during the school year. Online applications for benefits are available at [www.MySchoolApps.com](http://www.MySchoolApps.com). Any school meal debt accrued prior to the District's determination that the student is eligible for free or reduced meals remains the parent's responsibility.

### **Collection of Meal Charge Debt**

**Delinquent Debt:** As defined by the USDA, delinquent debt includes overdue balances with active, reasonable efforts being made to collect the outstanding amount due. Mesa County Valley SD 51 considers student meal accounts with a negative balance to be in delinquent status.

**Uncollectable and Bad Debt:** Delinquent debts that have been determined to be uncollectible will be reclassified as "bad debt". Graduating senior accounts are classified as bad debt as of the last day of May following graduation. Mesa County Valley SD 51 also classifies student accounts as "bad debt" when collection efforts have been unsuccessful for twelve (12) months after a student has left the District. Repayment of "bad debt" is an unallowable expense for the NSFSA; therefore, payment for this bad debt balance will come from other sources such as:

- The District's general fund
- Special funding from state or local governments
- Donations

**Donations:** Regardless of their source, monies received through D51 Nutrition Services as donations to pay off negative meal balances will be deposited into a District account set up specifically for meal account donations. Donations will be distributed annually at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) and applied to all accounts identified as bad debt. Any excess donated funds not used on bad debt in the current year, will be carried over to the next fiscal year.

**Refunds:** Families may request a refund of the student(s) meal account(s) at any time by contacting the school cafeteria or the Nutrition Services Office.