

# USD #248 Girard Schools

## Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

The district's meal charging requirements are as follows.

A charge account for students paying full or reduced price for meals may be established with the district. Students may charge no more than \$ -25.00 in the elementary grades, \$-25.00 in the middle or junior high grades, and \$-25.00 in the high school grades for the purchase of meals to this account without triggering the district's delinquent debt proceedings as outlined in this policy and board policy DP. Charging of a la carte or extra items to this account will not be permitted.

When the charge levels identified in this policy have been met, a student's meal account becomes delinquent. The student will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. Students who have delinquent accounts and cannot pay out of pocket for a meal will be provided a regular, reimbursable meal from the cafeteria menu, which shall be charged to the student's account while the district proceeds with attempts to resolve the delinquent debt with the student's parent or guardian. If attempts to receive payment for charged meals do not result in full payment of the debt in the timelines provided herein, debt collection proceedings will begin in accordance with board policy DP.

At least one verbal and one written warning shall be provided to a student and the student's parent or guardian prior to reaching the delinquent debt threshold outlined herein. Access to this policy will be provided to the student's parent or guardian with the written warning. If payment of the negative balance is not received within 5 working days of the delinquent debt threshold being attained, the debt will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection in accordance with board policy DP. If the debt is not paid within 10 days of mailing the final notice of the negative account balance under policy DP, it shall be considered bad debt for the purposes of federal law concerning unpaid meal charges.

Payments for school meals may be made at the school or district office, at the point of service of school meals, or online. Students, parents, and guardians of students are encouraged to prepay meal costs.

The district will provide a copy of this unpaid meal charges policy to all households at or before the start of school each year and to families and students that transfer into the district at the time of transfer. The terms of this policy will also be communicated to all district staff responsible for enforcing any aspect of the policy, a copy of the policy will be posted in district meal service facilities, and the policy will be made available on the district's website and social media accounts. Records of how and when it is communicated to households and staff will be retained.