

Administrative Procedure

The following notification is provided at the beginning of each school year as federally required notification regarding eligibility requirements and the application process for the free and reduced-price food service that are listed in Board policy 4:130, *Free and Reduced-Price Food Service* and 4:140, *Waiver of Student Fees*. For more information, see <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges>, and /or contact the Building Principal or designee.

To: Students, Parents/Guardians, and Staff

Re: Eligibility and Meal Charge Notifications

Meal Charges for Meal Provided by District

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Food Service Department:

- Responsible for maintaining meal account records.
- Responsible for providing written documentation of lunch activity when requested
- Responsible for notifying school administration of potential problems and/or repeat offenders.

District Office:

- Responsible for sending Unpaid Meal Letter to parents
- Working with households towards a reasonable resolution.

The Parent/Guardian:

- Responsible for immediate payment.
- Responsible for monitoring lunch activity on MySchoolBuck.com

Lake Villa School District's Food Service department recognizes adequate nutrition is essential to students' mental, physical, and academic growth. All children (grades K through grade 8) participating in the national school lunch program, whether at a free, reduced, or paid rate, will receive a full federally reimbursable meal that meets USDA requirements regardless if they do not have adequate money in their student account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service.

If a student does not have adequate money in their student account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service, student will receive a meal that will not be different from the other meal provided to the student in that school. The food service cashier keys a reimbursable lunch meal charging the student's account accordingly and sends a notification home with the student regarding insufficient funds for lunch meals. The Food Service clerk runs a biweekly report via our Nutrikids program showing all student accounts in a negative balance. Upon the first occurrence when a student account is in a negative balance greater than \$15.00, the District office clerk sends a written letter to the household asking for the student balance to be paid and also sends a copy of the procedure for unpaid meal charges to the household along with the letter. The letters are sent biweekly until the balance is paid in full. If outstanding balance continues to be unpaid, the District office clerk will make phone contact with the household asking for the student balance to be paid and will maintain documentation of each household communication interaction.

If the amount owed by a student for meals or snacks is owed and payable to a school district in an amount that is no less than \$500 and the school district has made reasonable efforts to collect the debt from the student's parent or guardian for at least one year, the school district may seek an offset under the State Comptroller Act.

District office clerk may work with families to establish long-term repayment plans. Unpaid meal charges may be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and collection efforts continue into the next school year.

The MySchoolBucks.com website is a pre-payment system whereby students' families/caregivers can pre-pay for reduced and paid meals as well as a la carte foods. Website can be accessed from District's website at <http://www.district41.org/food-service/> where the step-by-step instructions are included on how to make a payment into the lunch account. Families may check their account balance and add money electronically from a computer using this website. Money may also be added to student accounts via cash or check at the POS at each school. Payments for any meal(s) not received by a student approved for reduced meal prices or paid prices are carried over into the next month. Money left at the end of a school year is carried over into the next school year as delinquent debt and collection efforts continue into the new school year. If a student graduates and has money left in their student account, the Food Service office sends full reimbursement to the household less any outstanding balance with the school district.

Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board Policy 4:45, *Insufficient Fund Check and Debt Recovery*. The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt.

The above procedure is provided in writing via student handbook and electronically during on-line registration to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to Lake Villa School District during the school year. Both English and Spanish versions of this procedure may be available to all households. Additionally, this procedure is available on the Lake Villa School District's website at <http://www.district41.org/food-service/>. This meal charge procedure is provided to and is reviewed with all school level staff responsible for procedure enforcement, including food service personnel responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, food service staff responsible for notifying families of low balances, and district's office staff involved in notifying families of negative balances. School nurses, guidance counselors, principals, assistant principals, and other administrators are informed of this procedure.

Reference: Policy 4:130, Free and Reduced-Price Food Service, 4:140, Waiver of Student Fees and 4:45, Insufficient Fund Check and Debt Recovery