

UNPAID MEAL CHARGE POLICY

Okaloosa Academy's Food Service department recognizes adequate nutrition is essential to students' mental, physical, and academic growth. All children grades 4 through grade 12 participating in the national school breakfast program and the national school lunch program, whether at a free, reduced, or paid rate will receive a full reimbursable breakfast and/or lunch meal that meets the USDA requirements regardless if they do not have adequate money in their student lunch 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, all students may choose a meal from the required component contributions to create a reimbursable meal. The point of sale cashier keys a reimbursable breakfast and/or lunch meal charging the student's account accordingly. The Point of Sale cashier runs a weekly report via Freedom Café showing all student accounts in a negative balance greater than \$30.00. Upon the first occurrence when a student account is in a negative balance greater than \$30.00, the Point of Sale cashier sends a written letter to the household asking for the student balance to be paid and also sends a copy of the policy for unpaid meal charges to the household along with letter. Upon the second consecutive occurrence when a student account is in a negative balance greater than \$30.00, the Point of Sale cashier notifies the front office via written report. The Front Office makes reminder calls to households of students with the second negative balance greater \$30 mentioning the charge policy. The Front Office will keep and maintain documentation of each household communication interaction. The Front Office works 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.

My Freedom Cafe app is a pre-payment system whereby students' parents/families/caregivers can pre-pay for reduced and paid meals as well as a la carte foods. Families may check their account balance and add money electronically from a computer or mobile device using this app. Parents can also access the student lunch account to make payments at www.freedomcafeteria.com/Okaloosa. Money may also be added to student accounts via cash or check at the POS. Payments for any meal(s) not received by a student approved for reduced meal prices or paid price are carried over into the next month. Negative balances left at the end of a school year is carried over into the next school 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. If a student withdraws from school and has more than \$5.00 in their account, the Food Service department sends a letter to the household asking if they would like to receive full reimbursement.

The above policy 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 Okaloosa Academy during the school year. Both English and Spanish versions of this policy are available to all households. This policy is provided to households through a letter the first time it is applied to a student. Additionally, this policy is available on the Okaloosa Academy website at www.okaloosaacademy.org under the food services tab. This meal charge policy is provided to and is reviewed with all school level staff responsible for policy 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 school front office staff involved in notifying families of negative balances.