

Darrell Lynn Hines Academy Unpaid Meals and Debt Collection Procedure

DLHA is currently operating under the Community Eligibility Program (CEP). Therefore, the policy listed below is not in effect during the 2017-2018 school year.

This policy is written to notify all households of the DLHA policy for unpaid meals and debt collection procedures on the website. This policy is also available on the website, the student/parent handbook, and the back-to-school packet.

If a student or family account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals.

- Students will be allowed to charge up to \$5.00.
- Students with an overdrawn account are not allowed to charge ala carte items.

Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid food service accounts. When a student eligible for PAID meals has “cash in hand” to pay for a meal, the student will be served a meal regardless of unpaid foodservice accounts. The “cash in hand” will not be applied towards past due balances.

Notification of Account Status

Families have access to and are notified via several methods of their account status.

- Families can check their student’s meal account balance via PowerSchool.
- Families can contact the office for account balances.
- Weekly e-mails will be sent to all parents advising them of the student meal account balance(s).
- The student/family will be notified when the account has a negative balance via phone call, email, and/or written notice.
- Weekly emails will be sent the later part of the week to all students/families with a negative food service account.
- Notices will be sent home with students with negative balances.
- A second request for payment is sent if parents have not responded to the first request.
- A letter/invoice is sent via US Post to the household requesting payment.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt

When the student meal balance is negative, the following collection actions will be taken:

- The school will contact the household to request payment.
- The Food and Nutrition staff will contact the principal if no payment is received. The principal will contact the parent/guardian to determine an appropriate solution.
- The principal will contact the family and review with them their responsibility to provide meals for their student.
- Assistance from the county social services may be requested by the school if parents refuse to provide meals or pay for school prepared meals for their children.
- A formal letter will be sent to the household notifying that the debt will be turned over to the collection agency and the student meal account will be closed.
- All fees owed to the school must be paid in full on the last day of school.