

Hampstead School District	Policy Code: DO-R
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FOOD SERVICE MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCES

Payment is expected no later than when the meal is served and can be made by using the online payment system that is available on the district website. Fees associated with the use of this online system shall be borne by the depositor. Meals may also be paid for at the time of purchase with cash or personal check.

School administrators are authorized to monitor students who maintain negative balances. If a student’s account balance is in deficit of \$20.00 or more, the school will contact the student’s parents/guardians. Repeated or consistent negative balances may result in a parent/guardian meeting with school administration. A “Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application” will be offered to the parent / guardian. If a negative balance continues with no payments, the district may involve a collection agency in the process.

Negative Balances of \$20.00 or more

Students will not be allowed to carry a negative balance of \$20.00 or more on their student lunch account.

Elementary and Middle school students, who have a negative balance of \$20.00 or more, will be allowed to receive the standard qualified meal, but will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items without cash. After 2 attempts of trying to recover the debt from parents/guardians, the administration is authorized to shut off meal charging privileges to elementary and middle school students, and the parents/guardians must provide a bagged lunch from home.

The school administration may contact the child welfare authority in cases where child neglect is suspected due to parents/guardians not providing their child with a lunch.

In the event that a student’s meal account is \$20.00 or more in the negative, and attempts to recover the bad debt from the parent/guardian are unsuccessful, the district may use the following actions to collect the bad debt. Actions include but are not limited to: prohibiting the student from purchasing meals, or extra a la carte items, prohibiting a student from participating in graduation activities, hiring a collection agency, setting up a payment plan, and using small claims court to collect the bad debt. In these cases, parents/guardians will be notified by mail as to the action the district will take.

Administrators will have authority and discretion to charge meals or items for guests, staff and/or students on a case-by-case basis, as long as the debt does not go beyond \$20.00.