

## LEWIS CENTRAL NUTRITION SERVICES MEAL CHARGES POLICY

In accordance with state and federal law, Lewis Central Community Schools (LCCS) adopts the following policy to ensure school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day, prevent public knowledge of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition program.

### **Payment of Meals**

All meal purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins. Families have use of a meal account. Payment methods to the family meal account include the following:

1. Credit and debit card payments online. Go to [www.lewiscentral.org](http://www.lewiscentral.org), under Quick Links click on e-Funds for Schools.
2. Credit and debit card payments over the phone at 712-366-8267 from 7:00 am – 3:00 pm.
3. Payments in cash, check, money order or cashier's check can be accepted through any of the following methods:
  - a. Drop off at any school office.
  - b. Drop off at Nutrition Services office located at Titan Hill.
  - c. Deposit money at the cash register in the cafeteria.
  - d. Send payment with student in an envelope to school.

When the family account balance reaches \$0.00 only meals may be charged to the account up to -\$25.00. Students who do not have a positive balance shall not be allowed to charge a la carte items until the negative balance has been paid. When the account reaches the negative balance limit of -\$25.00, a student shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid. In the event when a family account has reached -\$25.00, students should eat breakfast at home and bring a lunch until the account has returned to a positive status.

Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt shall be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays cash for the meal when it is received.

### **Negative Account Balances**

The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low. Additionally, the school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. The school district will coordinate communications with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Families will be notified by an automated email system of a low balance once the family account balance reaches \$6.00. Families will be notified by letters sent home and phone calls to parents/guardians when the family account balance reaches -\$20.00. All negative balances not paid prior to the end of the school year will be charged a \$20.00 service fee. Nutrition services will work with the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

### **Communication of the Policy**

The policy and supporting information regarding meal charges shall be provided in writing to:

1. All households at or before the start of each school year;
2. Students and families who transfer into the district, at time of transfer.
3. All staff responsible for enforcing any aspect of the policy.