

## CUSTER COUNTY DELINQUENT FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNTS POLICY

Families must provide for the nutrition of their children by either sending meals with their student or by purchasing meals from our Food Services Department. Parents/guardians choosing to purchase meals are encouraged to pay for meals in advance. When a student's account balance is completely exhausted and becomes a negative balance, a letter/billing statement will be mailed to the parents/guardians of record.

If an account drops below **negative \$100**, then it will be considered delinquent. The following options are available for delinquent accounts:

- The student can bring their own meal from home.
- The student can bring cash into the school office and be served a meal.
- If the parent/guardian fails to provide the student with a meal or meal money, then the district will provide the student a reduced item meal for a grace period - a maximum of four days. The cost of the reduced item meal (often a sandwich and milk) will be added to the account. Parent/guardians will be contacted by the superintendent.
- If after the four day grace period, the parent/guardian still fails to provide the student with a lunch or lunch money, the parent/guardian must meet with the superintendent and also provide a meal for their student. No meals will be served from the cafeteria lunch line. If the parent/guardian fails to provide a meal for their student, then the family will be reported to Custer County Social Services for neglect.

Office staff will send frequent letters/billing statements notifying the parents/ guardians of balances which are trending to be negative as well as actual negative balances being incurred. School administrators will work cooperatively with parents/guardians to resolve delinquent accounts. We ask that parents visit with their child to explain that they are not able to pay for a school meal. You need to let your student(s) know that a meal must be packed from home and that your students are not to go through the cafeteria line.

The principal of the student's school may also be visiting with the student about their meal status. Our goal is to support and to honor the student; not to humiliate in any manner.

The implementation of this guideline policy is due to several large negative meal balances (some in excess of \$1,000) that the school district can no longer afford to subsidize. These accounts must have progress made to pay the financial obligation.

Importantly, this practice **will not apply to any student on a Free Meal program** status, but will apply to those on a Reduced Meal or Full Price Meal program status.

Adopted: October 11, 2016