

## **New Charging Procedure for School Meals Grinnell-Newburg CSD Begins August 22, 2017**

The Grinnell-Newburg Community School District is committed to providing meals to students who choose to participate in the lunch program but also feel very strongly that there is an obligation for parents/guardians and/or students to satisfy all financial obligations to the lunch program in a timely manner.

The Grinnell-Newburg Community School District understands the importance of a well-balanced lunch in the educational experience of each student who attends our schools. The revenues from the school lunch program supports the Food Service Department and allow the department to operate without the assistance of general fund monies, which are used to directly support education. To ensure fiscally responsible business practices and in order to maintain low cost meals for all students, we must keep charging of meals (negative lunch account balances) to a minimum.

### **Notice Regarding Collections of Negative Student Lunch Accounts**

The Food Service Department would like to inform parents that delinquent family meal accounts would **start a collections process** to retrieve the money owed. A delinquent account is any family lunch account that is **over \$20.00 negative** as of the **1<sup>st</sup> of each month**. The District may assess a fee associated with the collections process on any delinquent account. Options may include: collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

Students in grades K-8 will be provided with one breakfast and lunch meal per day if they do not bring an alternate lunch from home, but the account will continue to accumulate meal charges even after the collection process has been started. Students in grades 9-12 are only **permitted to charge up to \$-20.00** before they will be required to either have cash for their meal purchase or bring an alternative meal from home. 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 for the meal when it is received.

After a lunch account is in the negative, only one reimbursable breakfast and lunch can be purchased per day. No a la carte purchases can be made if the account is in the negative.

#### **Will I be notified of my student's account status?**

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.

#### **Parents are notified numerous ways:**

1. Middle and high school students will be notified at the cash register when the balance is \$10.00 or below.
2. The elementary, middle and high school students will receive balance letters for accounts less than 15.00 sent via e-mail on a weekly basis.
3. Once the family account has reached positive \$5.00 or under a daily email will be sent. At negative \$20.00 a daily automated phone call and e-mail will be sent through the Infinite Campus system.
4. Parents can set your own limits in your parent portal if you want more reminders about the lunch account.

**How can I check my family account balance and student's spending history?**

On the computer- Go to <http://www.grinnell-k12.org> →Click on Parents→Click on Infinite Campus and go to parent portal→Enter Username and Password→Click on Food Service tab→Look at family account balance and click each individual student to access spending history.

**What options do I have to pay for meals?**

1. Online payments. If you want the payment to be in the account by lunch that day, the payment needs to be **completed by 10:00 am**. By logging into your parent portal account a payment may be made with an e-check or credit card. You will immediately receive an e-mail receipt confirming your deposit and your lunch balance should be updated in a few minutes. **To make an online payment: Go to <http://www.grinnell-k12.org> →Click on Parents→Click on Infinite Campus and click parent portal→Enter Username and Password→Click on Payments→Fill in payment under Food Service section in the family account.**
2. Send cash or check with your student. We recommend sending a check and placing your student's name on the "memo" line.

**How can I apply for free or reduced price meals?**

If you think you may qualify for free or reduced meals based on income and size of your household, or because you receive food assistance, please fill out an Iowa Eligibility Application. You may return it at registration, at any Grinnell-Newburg School, or to the district office.

**If my family is on free and reduced, do I need to pay off my negative balance?**

Yes. The free and reduced status only covers one reimbursable breakfast and one reimbursable lunch per day. The following reasons may explain why your child is in the negative and these charges that will need to be paid by the family to cover these extra expenses:

1. The child was in the negative before their application for free and reduced was turned in. These previous charges still need to be paid. A **new** application needs to be turned in **every school year**.
2. Your child purchased a la carte items at the middle school or high school. A la carte charges will need to be paid by the family. This also includes second meals or entrees.
3. Your child purchased a single milk (without a meal) or extra milk. They will receive one milk with a reimbursable meal. Extra milk or a milk purchased to go along with a home sack lunch isn't covered by the free and reduced status.

**Can I limit what my student spends in the cafeteria?**

Yes. If you don't want your student to purchase a la carte we can put limits in the Infinite Campus system. Please contact Carrie Nachazel at 641-236-2668.

**Can my student charge (go into a negative balance) when purchasing a la carte including milk?**

No. There is no charging of a la carte at all school levels. Once an account is at zero balance or if the purchase will take them into a negative balance, the purchase of a la carte is NOT allowed. This does include the purchase of a single milk or extra milk.