



School Meal Charging Policy & Procedure

The goal of the school meal program is to provide healthy, affordable meals to students during the school day. Students may receive breakfast and lunch at no cost to them if they qualify. Families can submit a free and reduced price family meal application annually to determine eligibility. This is done online at the following website: <http://www.myfreedomcafe.com/Deca>. Some families may automatically qualify through other programs they are utilizing such as SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) or OWF (Ohio Works First). All families will be notified of their eligibility via letter.

Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) recognizes that some families may not be eligible for free or reduced-price meals but may have difficulty finding sufficient funds for their children's daily meals. Oftentimes, this results in a negative balance on the student's meal account. It is important that we feed the children to ensure adequate learning. Therefore, the following charging policy and procedure has been implemented to assist families with additional time to pay off negative balances while the students are fed.

Charging Policy:

- All students are allowed to charge up to 2 **meals**, which are not to exceed \$5.50
- Snacks and a la carte items are not allowed to be charged, only milk and meals
- Any payments sent in with the student, will first go towards any negative balances prior to allowing for purchases (such as extras/snacks)
- Once a student's debt is paid, the charging policy restarts.

Alternative Meal:

- If a student has exceeded the charge limit, an alternate meal will be provided at no cost:
 - Peanut Butter Sandwich and Water
 - Cheese Sandwich and Water if a documented allergy to peanuts is on file

Communication Procedures:

- The charging policy and procedure will be posted on the district website and also added to the school newsletter often, as a reminder.
- Once a student goes into the negative, the following will occur:
 - A verbal reminder is given to the student
 - A written notification is sent to the student's home
- Parents can add money to their student(s) accounts via check or cash/coin daily
 - Please add your students name and student ID number to the bag/envelope in which the money is sent to ensure accuracy
- Parents are encouraged to view their student(s) meal accounts online, to ensure adequate funds are available on the student's meal accounts at all times. This can be done once an account is set up with Freedom Cafe, see above URL.
- All lunch debt must be paid in full prior to leaving Dayton Early College Academy at graduation or requesting to transfer to a new school.
- School nutrition employees make every effort to catch a student whose negative balance has exceeded the limit, from being offered a hot lunch to prevent it from being taken away and replaced with an alternative meal. There will be times it does occur but the child will be spoken to kindly and in private.