
Note: The Texas Department of Agriculture provides further guidance related to the management of food and nutrition programs in the [Administrator's Reference Manual \(ARM\)](#).¹

See policy CDC for guidance on donations to pay outstanding student meal charge balances.

School Meal Leftovers

All state and local health and safety regulations will be followed if the District allows a campus to minimize food waste by selling, sharing, or donating school meal leftovers.

Sales

The District *allows* leftovers to be sold at a campus cafeteria or other designated eating area as second meals, à la carte items, or meals.

Any items sold must meet the competitive food requirements. Income from sales will be handled in accordance with school nutrition program guidelines.

Alternatively, the leftovers *may* be incorporated into future reimbursable meals.

Sharing Tables

The District *does not allow* a campus to set up leftover sharing tables for school meal items students do not want.

Food Donations

When an official of a nonprofit organization, such as a local food bank or charitable organization, is directly affiliated with the campus, including a teacher, school counselor, or parent of a student enrolled at the campus, the District *allows* the campus to donate food to the nonprofit organization.

If the District allows a campus to donate leftovers, permission to donate food will be granted through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the nonprofit organization.

The food donated by the campus to the nonprofit organization may include:

- Surplus food prepared for breakfast, lunch, or dinner meals or a snack to be served at the campus cafeteria, subject to all applicable local, state, and federal requirements. Surplus food will not be intentionally prepared to support the donation program.
- Food donated to the campus as the result of a food drive or similar event.

The food that will be donated may include the following:

- Packaged or unpackaged unserved food;
- Packaged served food if the packaging is in good condition;
- Whole, uncut produce;
- Wrapped raw produce; and
- Unpeeled fruit that is required to be peeled before consumption.

The MOU will address procedures regarding notification to students about the program and distribution of food to students. The nonprofit will work with the campus principal to establish where food may be stored on the campus and the times and locations when food may be distributed on the campus.

The District will follow all applicable local, state, and federal food safety regulations for handling and storing donated food. Temporary storage of food in school nutrition program equipment or facilities will be in accordance with school nutrition program guidelines.

A campus employee may volunteer to assist the nonprofit organization in preparing and/or distributing the food. The employee must obtain permission from the employee's supervisor if these activities occur during the employee's regularly scheduled working hours.

The employee *will not* be able to charge time to the school nutrition program when identifying and organizing food items to be donated. The employee may not charge time to the school nutrition program when performing operational tasks for the food donation program. In addition, the employee volunteer may not take food for personal use.

Free or Reduced-Price School Meals

A parent or guardian may contact *Free and Reduced Clerk* at (281) 284-0712 to obtain information for applying for free or reduced-price school meals.

A student who qualifies for free meals will never be denied a meal, even if the student has a negative balance from other purchases, such as à la carte items.

[See COB for further information on free and reduced-price meals.]

Nondiscrimination Statement

If the District receives federal financial assistance for programs and activities for food and nutrition services, the District will include the [nondiscrimination statement](#)² provided by the U.S. Department of

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	<p>Agriculture (USDA) on all forms of communication and printed program materials. The USDA provides the nondiscrimination language in English and Spanish in the Texas Department of Agriculture's Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 3, Civil Rights and Confidentiality.³ Posters⁴ are available on the USDA FNS Civil Rights website.</p>
Insufficient Meal Card or Meal Account Balance	<p>Any student who uses a prepaid meal card or meal account to purchase school meals, including reduced-price meals, will be allowed a grace period each school year, as established by the Board, during which the student may continue to charge school meals after the account balance has been exhausted. [See CO(LOCAL)]</p> <p>The student <i>will not</i> be allowed to charge à la carte items or extra items during the grace period.</p> <p>Any student who has an insufficient meal card or who has an insufficient meal account balance <i>will</i> be able to purchase a meal if the student brings cash to purchase the meal.</p>
Lowest-Cost Reimbursable Meal	<p>After the grace period has ended, the student will be served the lowest-cost reimbursable meal.</p>
Medical Notification	<p>When offering lowest-cost reimbursable meals, the District will provide modified meals to any student requesting dietary accommodations in accordance with the student's care plan. [See FFAF]</p>
Overt Identification	<p>The District will not use any strategy or notification method that overtly identifies the free and reduced-price meal eligibility or unpaid account status of any student. Examples of prohibited practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcing or publicizing the names of students who have insufficient funds or unpaid meal charges. • Requiring students who have free or reduced-price meal eligibility or unpaid meal charges to use a different serving line to pick up a lowest-cost reimbursable meal. • Notifying students about a low or negative account balance in front of other students. • Using hand stamps, stickers, or other physical markers to identify students' account status or asking students to raise their hands to self-identify their account status. • Sending visibly marked notices home with students who have outstanding balances.

To prevent the overt identification of a student with insufficient funds, the student and parent will be discreetly instructed on how the student will access the lowest-cost reimbursable meal in the food service line, and the lowest-cost reimbursable meal will be available to all students as a choice on the regular meal service line.

Notification

The District will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal card or meal account balances are low and will communicate privately with families to resolve unpaid charges. Notification methods that overtly identify a student with unpaid meal charges are prohibited.

The parent or guardian will be notified in writing by email from the child's SchoolCafe account when the account reaches the level pre-selected by the parent.

Repayment

Unpaid student meal charges become a debt owed to the District. The District will begin collecting debt immediately after expiration of the grace period.

The District will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt and will establish a schedule for repayment. Only appropriate school personnel trained in USDA confidentiality requirements may request payment from families with unpaid meal charges.

If a parent or guardian does not repay a debt, the District will take the following actions:

- The debt will be turned over to the Superintendent or designee for collection.
- The debt will be turned over to collection agencies.
- The District will use any other legal method permitted by law.

¹ Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM): <https://squaremeals.org/Programs/National-School-Lunch-Program/Policy-ARM>

² USDA Nondiscrimination Statement: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights/usda-nondiscrimination-statement-other-fns-programs>

³ Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 3, *Civil Rights and Confidentiality*: https://squaremeals.org/Portals/8/files/ARM/ARM_Section3_Civil-RightsConfidentiality_220728.pdf

⁴ And Justice for All Posters: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cr/and-justice-all-posters-guidance-and-translations>