Torrance Unified School District

Nutrition Services Department
2335 Plaza del Amo, Torrance, CA 90501
310-972-6350

Meal Charge Policy 2020-21

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians shall be notified of the District's meal payment policies. Households will receive an information packet from the school site that includes the meal charge policy and how to fill out a meal application. New families will be given an information packet about the Nutrition Services Department upon enrollment at the Family Welcome Enrollment Center**.** Throughout the year, families will receive emails, letters and phone call messages regarding student account balances. This year we are asking all households to pre-pay for meals on the student's accounts since we are "attempting" to go cashless, but will make an exception if the situation requires it.

Households are encouraged to apply online at https://family.titank12.com by selecting "Apply for Meals today." A Titan account is not needed to apply for the free/reduced meal program. Applications may also be filled out in person at the Nutrition Services office. A new application must be submitted **annually** in order to receive meal benefits. The Direct Certification process will occur monthly throughout the school year in an effort to qualify students for free or reduced-price meals, and meal applications are available year-round.

Students eligible for reduced-price meals will be allowed to charge meals to their account per EC49557(C). Students eligible for reduced-price meals are always provided a complete meal regardless of their account balance, and the student's account will be charged the appropriate reduced-price amount. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping the student's account current by monitoring and depositing funds in the student's cafeteria account.

All other students are charged a set price for breakfast and lunch. Students that do not have sufficient funds will still be served a complete meal of their choice regardless of the level of debt incurred by the household. The student's meal account will then be charged the set price and will accrue a negative balance until the account is paid in full. Parents/guardians are responsible for paying meal charges, and for keeping the student's account current by monitoring and depositing funds in the student's cafeteria account.

Payments on an account can be made at the school site or the Nutrition Services Office for no additional fee. Payments can also be made online through Titan School Solutions for a small transaction fee at https://family.titank12.com. Each student has an account linked to their student ID number. Once a student leaves TUSD, any unclaimed excess funds in the account after three years will be applied to outstanding year-end bad debt.

Parents/guardians will be notified of a student's negative balance by an automated school messaging system no less than three times per week. Negative balance notifications are sent via email, U.S. Mail, and phone calls. Low balance notifications are sent no less than twice per week to the primary household contact listed in the Student Information System.

Unpaid meal charges that have been unrecovered, after all reasonable steps have been taken, is considered bad debt by the end of the fiscal year in which the debt was

incurred. Bad debt is an unallowable cost to the Food Services budget, per Title 2, *Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR),* Section 200.426. Bad debt must be repaid through nonfederal funding sources (e.g. Parent-Teacher Association or district general fund). This will negatively impact resources and services available to TUSD classrooms.

Maintaining a positive fund balance in a student's account is critical not only to the operation of the breakfast and lunch program, but also the general operations of the District.

Any questions may be directed to Kathleen Cole RDN, Director of Nutrition Services, at 310-972-6350 or cole.kathleen@tusd.org.

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