**DISTRICT 58**

**MEAL CHARGE STANDARD PRACTICE**

The goal of Downers Grove Grade School District 58 is to provide students with healthy meals   each day. The purpose of this written practice is to address the need for school food authorities (SFA’s) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which would include, if applicable, the availability of alternate meals.  Because all students in participating schools may purchase reimbursable school meals, SFA’s must have a written practice in place for children who are purchasing meals at the reduced price or full price, but do not have money in their account, or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service.  Such a practice ensures that school food service professionals, school administrators, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations in these situations.

**Full Pay Students** will pay for meals at the district’s published standard rate each day.  A student will be allowed to charge full meals to their account after the balance reaches zero, up to a negative balance of $500.  No a la carte items may be charged to a student’s account if they do not have money available in their lunch account or in hand.  A la carte items include, but are not limited to, water, pop tarts, chips, Rice Krispie Treats, etc.

**Free Meal Benefits** are available to students with an approved Free or Reduced Priced Lunch Application, or who have been Directly Certified by the Illinois State Board of Education.  Students approved for free meals will receive a complete plate lunch consisting of all required meal components, including milk.  A la carte purchases must be paid for with funds from the student’s meal account or cash in hand.  No a la carte items may be charged to a student’s account if they do not have money available in their lunch account or in hand.

**Reduced Meal Benefits** are available to students with an approved Free or Reduced Priced Lunch Application. Students approved for reduced priced meals will receive a complete plate lunch consisting of all required meal components, including milk for $.40 each day.  A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of five (5) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. No a la carte items may be charged to a student’s account if they do not have money available in their lunch account or on hand.  A la carte items include, but are not limited to, water, pop tarts, chips, Rice Krispie Treats.  Once a student has charged those five meals he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate.  Sample menu alternates: cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk.  This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child’s meal account at the reduced rate.

**School Cafeterias** utilize a computerized point of sale/cash register system that maintains records of all monies deposited and spent for each student.  This information is available to parents/guardians by setting up an account at [www.pushcoin.com](http://www.pushcoin.com), or by speaking to the cafeteria manager.

**Parents/Guardians** are responsible for meal payment to the District.  Deficit balance notices will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to set low balance notifications through PushCoin, which will be email to the parent/guardian when a student’s lunch account drops below a designated amount.

**Students/Parents/Guardians** pay for lunch in by depositing funds in the student’s lunch wallet via PushCoin, depositing cash to the student’s account with the food service cashier, or by providing a check to the payable to Downers Grove Grade School District 58 to the food service cashier.  Adequate funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day.

**Refunds** for withdrawn or graduating 8th graders are processed automatically when a student has in excess of $10.00 left in their account.  Parents must request a refund when the balance is less than $10.00.  The request can be made in writing, by phone, or email.  Funds in any amount may also be transferred to a sibling’s account with a written (or emailed) request.

**Unclaimed funds** must be requested within one school year.  After one year, unclaimed funds will then become the property of Downers Grove Grade School District 58.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed.  If financial hardship exists, parents/guardians will be encouraged to apply for free or reduced priced lunches for their student(s).