



## School Meal Charge Policy

The Keefe Regional Technical School District understands that healthy, nutritious meals are important to a student's readiness and ability to learn.

In addition, Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 210.10(a)(1) General Nutrition Requirements states "Schools must provide nutritious and well-balanced meals to all children they serve." In accordance with this regulation, Keefe Regional Technical School District will not deny any student access to school meals.

However, unpaid charges place a financial strain on the districts School Nutrition Services department.

In order to be in compliance of all who participate in the school meal program, the policy establishes procedures for methods of payment, charge availability and collection methods.

### **Keefe Regional Technical School District establishes the following goals:**

- To treat students with dignity at all times
- To reduce or waive all cost of reimbursable meals for students who qualify for free school meals after completing the Massachusetts Free and reduced Price School Meals Household Application or qualifying through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Health and Human Services, Virtual Gateway.
- To encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) to assume the responsibility of payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding the method of payment for meals, meal charging and collection methods.

## Student Meal Accounts

### **Keefe Regional Technical School District establishes the following goals:**

Any student whose school meal account has a zero or negative balance will be allowed to charge a **reimbursable meal only**. A "reimbursable meal" is defined as a meal consisting of at least three of the five components (grain, meat or meat alternate, fruit, vegetable and milk) and must include a fruit and/or vegetable component. These charges will result in a negative balance on the student's account until funds are added to the student account.

### **For Students with Free Lunch Status**

- The federal school lunch program allows qualifying students to receive one breakfast and lunch daily at no cost.
- Students are required to take a reimbursable meal.
- Items sold on an a la carte basis are not part of the USDA program and must be paid for in cash. A la carte items cannot be charged.

### **For Students with Reduced Price Lunch Status**

- The federal school lunch program allows qualifying students to receive one breakfast and lunch daily at the reduce rate.
- Students are required to take a reimbursable meal.
- Items sold on an a la carte basis are not part of the USDA program and must be paid for in cash. A la carte items cannot be charged.
- Students with reduce price status will be allowed to charge reimbursable meals up to one week of meals before the process to repay begins.

### **For Students with Paid Lunch Status**

- Prices for school lunch are set by the district in accordance to federal and state regulations.
- Items sold on an a la carte basis are not part of the USDA program. A la carte items cannot be charged.
- Students with paid status will be allowed to charge reimbursable meals up to one week of meals before the repayment process begins.

### **Repayment of Charged Meals**

- A list of students with negative balances will be provided to the Discipline office on a regular basis.
- Once a student account has reached a negative balance, the School Nutrition Director will attempt to contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) to collect monies owed. The director will keep a log on file of all calls and emails made. Under no circumstances will students be denied a reimbursable meal due to lack of funds.
- If the issue remains unresolved after 3 attempts to reach the parent(s) or guardian(s), the Discipline office will contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) directly to collect the owed monies.
- If the issue still remains unresolved within 5 school days, the matter will be turned over to the Director of Finance for appropriate action.
- Graduating seniors and students transferring out of Keefe Tech must pay their owed food service monies prior to signing out of school.
- Account balances carry from year to year. Funds can be transferred to another Keefe Tech student or donated to students in need of food service financial assistance. Refunds of monies left on students accounts may be given to the parent/guardian of a student that made the initial deposit, in accordance with the Districts refund procedure.

**Parents and or guardians are encouraged to apply for Free and Reduced Priced meals under the federal government's guidelines. Applications are available at the school or on the District's website.**