

**ELWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**NUTRITION & FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT**  
**CHARGE POLICY**  
**2023-2024**

The Nutrition & Food Service Department of Elwood Community School Corporation (ECSC) wants to ensure that every student has access to meals daily. Per USDA guidelines, ECSC is not allowed to incur bad debt from unpaid meal charges. We do recognize that there can be extenuating circumstances that may cause a student to not have money in their account. Therefore, a policy has been put into place to ensure students receive a courtesy light meal in these circumstances. Additionally, if families need to apply for meal assistance, they can do so at any time throughout the school year. Free and reduced meal applications are available at the schools or online at [linqconnect.com](http://linqconnect.com). In the event a student does not have money to pay for a meal, the following limits are set as to how much a student can charge.

When a student in **grades pre-K-6** does not have funds for a meal, the student will be provided a regular lunch. The cost of this meal will be added to the student's account. Once an account reaches a negative balance over \$20, the student will be offered an alternative lunch consisting of a peanut butter & jelly sandwich, fruit, and milk. This meal will be offered at a charge of \$0.40 cents.

When a student in **grades 7-12** does not have funds for a meal, the student will be provided a regular lunch. The student shall not be permitted to charge any à la carte food or beverage items. The cost of the regular lunch will be added to the student's account. Once an account reaches a negative balance over \$20, the student will be offered an alternative lunch consisting of a peanut butter & jelly sandwich, fruit, and milk. This meal will be offered at a charge of \$0.40 cents.

Notices will be sent home once a week to **all students** who have a negative balance to notify the parent/guardian that their student's lunch account is in the negative and that a payment is due. Students in grades **7-12** will also be verbally reminded by the cashier to bring money in for their lunch account. In addition, Parents/guardians have the option to sign up for low balance email reminders at [linqconnect.com](http://linqconnect.com).

If an account balance continues to remain in the negative, phone calls will be made to the parent/guardian by the cafeteria manager.

Payments can be made using [linqconnect.com](http://linqconnect.com) or sending a check or cash with the student.

**This Charge Policy will go into effect on Monday, September 18, 2023.**