

## **STUDENT MEAL CHARGING Provision and Management Guidelines**

Revised Aug 19, 2008

Recognizing the occasional need for students to charge meals, the following guidelines are set in place as an equitable framework for collection procedures of negative balances in lunch accounts.

### **Elementary**

#### **First Notice:**

When a student's lunch account has accrued a negative balance a reminder to the parent will be sent home with the student in the weekly folder. Meals will continue to be provided to the student on a "charging" basis. Ala Carte items may not be purchased if a student's lunch account has a negative balance. Ala carte items may never be charged.

#### **Continued Notices:**

If the account balance remains negative, notices will continue to be sent at least once per week in the weekly folder. A phone call should be made to the parent by the Food Service Manager to attempt to make arrangements to bring the account current.

If contact has not been made with the parent or satisfactory arrangements achieved and the account accrues to a negative balance of \$20.00 or more, a notice will be mailed to the home and the school principal (or his/her designee) will make personal contact with the parent to determine if total payment will be made or if a payment arrangement can be reached. The parent may be notified at this time that should the account accrue to an amount greater than \$50.00 in arrears and a payment arrangement is not achieved, the account may be sent to an agency for collection. **Meals will continue to be provided to the student unless the Superintendent makes a decision to stop meal services.**

### **Middle School Students**

(grades 6-8)

Middle School students will be allowed to charge for 6 days (including breakfast) after which time meals will be provided on a "pay as you go" basis unless other payment arrangements have been made. **No alternative meal will be provided. Ala carte items may not be purchased by students with a negative balance.** Ala carte items may never be charged.

A reminder to the parent of the negative balance will be placed in the homeroom teacher's box to be distributed to the student no less than twice per week or mailed home if the balance remains negative with no contact by the parent.

### **High School Students**

(grades 9-12)

Secondary students may be allowed to charge for one day only. A notice will be sent to the parent when the student's account accrues a negative balance. Secondary students will not be allowed to continue to charge meals. **Ala carte items may not be purchased by students with a negative balance. Ala Carte items may never be charged.**

### **Adult Accounts**

Adults are expected to pay for meals daily or in advance. If an adult account becomes negative a notice will be given to the adult staff member.

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### Options:

If there is a known situation occurring in the home (loss of job, divorce, medical crisis, etc.) causing extreme financial difficulty, the school principal may initiate a “Severe Need” option. A “Severe Need Option” may only be used in the case of the extreme emergency situations that can be documented. This option will qualify the student for free meal benefits on a temporary basis. If the parent is unwilling or unable to sign the application, it must then be signed by the school principal. This option does not clear the negative balance from the student’s account or absolve the parent of responsibility for the amount owed.

### COLLECTIONS OF NEGATIVE ACCOUNTS

If any account accrues to an amount of \$50.00 or more at any time (including uncollected negative balances that were from a prior year) the parent will be notified that a payment arrangement must be achieved or the account may be sent to an agency for collection. Meals will be provided on a “pay as you go” basis until the account is current. An alternative meal will not be provided.

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