

## **3012**

### **School Meal Program and Meal Charges**

#### **Meal Program.**

The school district will make a school meal program available to students. The cost of the program will be determined by the board of education so as to make the program as nearly self-supporting as possible. With board approval, the district may contract with a private company or corporation for the management and/or provision of the program.

The district will notify the families with children attending school of the current guidelines for free or reduced-price school meals. A copy of the complete regulations and procedures regarding reduced-price and free meals shall be available in the office of the superintendent.

#### **Meal Charge Policy.**

The district will notify students and their families of the policy for Charged Meals, meaning meals received by a student when the student does not have money in hand or in his or her food account. This policy applies to students who receive meals at the free, reduced, or full rates.

Notice of this policy must be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the school during the school year. Notice may be provided through the student handbook, student registration materials, online portal used to access student accounts, direct mailing or e-mail, newsletter, the district website, and/or any other appropriate means. Notice of this policy will also be provided to all school staff responsible for the enforcement of it, including food service professionals responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, staff involved in notifying families of low or negative balances, and other staff involved in enforcing any aspect of this policy.

The district's policy on charged meals is:

- Reminders for payment are e-mailed and/or texted to the parent or guardian via lunch program once the family balance falls below \$13.00. When a family balance receives a notice, payment is required immediately.
- If the family balance falls below zero for 4 school days:
  - o The account will be considered as delinquent. The parents or guardian will be required to provide immediate payment or set up a payment plan.
  - o If the parents or guardian have not already done so, application for the free and reduced price meal benefits will need to be submitted. The Elementary secretary will determine according to federally established guidelines whether or not the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals. If the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals, they are still obligated to pay the delinquent balance due. The application cannot be backdated.
- If the family balance is below zero for more than 4 school days:
  - o The students will be denied further credit and will not be able to eat the hot breakfast or lunch unless payment is made current on the family account or payment for that individual meal is made prior to eating.
  - o An alternate cold meal for lunch will be provided upon request.

- o If payment of the account balance in full and pre-payment made for future meals is not made, an approved payment plan must be established.

- o If the parents or guardian have not already done so, application for the free and reduced price meal benefits will need to be submitted. The Elementary secretary will determine according to federally established guidelines whether or not the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals. If the family qualifies for free or reduced price meals, they are still obligated to pay the delinquent balance due. The application cannot be backdated.

**Alternate Meals:**

An alternate meal will not be offered for breakfast. For lunch, the students will discreetly be given a tray with the alternate cold lunch during the time the regular hot meal is denied. The students of a family with a delinquent balance who have received an alternate meal for 5 consecutive days and the family balance is still below zero will be denied further alternate meals. At this point, the parents or guardian will be responsible for providing a breakfast and lunch meal for their students.

**Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt**

The school district is required to make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges. The building principal or his or her designee will contact households about unpaid meal charges and notify them again of the availability of the free and reduced meal program and/or establish payment plans and due dates by telephone, e-mail, or other written or oral communication. If these collection efforts are unsuccessful, the school district may pursue any other methods to collect delinquent debt as allowed by law.

Collection efforts may continue into a new school year.

Adopted on: July 11, 2022

Revised on: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed on: \_\_\_\_\_