

1 **3012**
2 **School Meal Program and Meal Charges**

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4 **Meal Program.** The school district will make a school meal program
5 available to students where feasible. The cost of the program will be
6 determined by the board of education so as to make the program as nearly
7 self-supporting as possible. With board approval, the district may contract
8 with a private company or corporation for the management and/or provision
9 of the program.

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

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

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

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33 The district's policy on charged meals is if a student has no funds available
34 to pay for a meal, the student will be permitted to charge up to five meals.
35 Thereafter, if a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, no food will
36 be provided.

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38 Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal,
39 even if they have accrued a negative balance from other food purchases.
40 School staff may prohibit any students from charging a la carte or extra
41 items if they do not have cash in hand or their account has a negative
42 balance.

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45 If a student repeatedly lacks funds to purchase a meal, has not brought a
46 meal from home, and is not enrolled in a free meal program, the district will
47 use its resources and contacts to protect the health and safety of the
48 student. Failure or refusal of parents or guardians to provide meals for
49 students may require mandatory reporting to child protection agencies as
50 required by law.

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52 **Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt**

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

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63 Collection efforts may continue into a new school year.

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65 In the event that the Nebraska Department of Education develops a state-
66 level meal charge policy, it shall supersede that portion of this policy.

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68 Adopted on: April 8, 2008

69 Revised on: May 9, 2017

70 Reviewed on: December 13, 2011; February 10, 2015; May 9, 2017;
71 December 11, 2018