

## **Negative Account Balances Policy 8500 – Food Services**

Students will be permitted to purchase meals from the District's food service using either cash on hand or a food service account. A student may be allowed to incur a negative food service account balance subject to the following conditions.

Students may be permitted to accumulate negative food service account balance as determined by the District Administrator. The District Administrator shall determine the manner of determining permissible account balances by grade level. A student shall not be permitted to purchase a la carte items without sufficient account balance or cash on hand.

A student who has exceeded the permissible negative balance amount in his/her account and does not have cash on hand sufficient to purchase a meal will be treated respectfully. The District will provide meals to students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them, will provide parents of students who charge meals with a notification when a student charges a meal and will make efforts to collect the charges incurred by the students so that the unpaid charges are not classified as bad debt at the end of the school year.

If a student has a significant negative lunch account balance, s/he shall be provided an alternate meal or a reimbursable meal, depending on the circumstances, the cost of which shall continue to accrue to his/her negative lunch account balance, and his/her parent(s) shall be contacted to collect the outstanding charges. The alternate meal will be a low-cost alternative to the regular reimbursable meal and shall meet USDA nutritional standards or the Smart Snacks in Schools Regulations so that it qualifies for reimbursement under the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program.

This policy and any implementing guidelines shall be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the school or School District during the school year. The policy and implementing guidelines will also be provided to all District staff with responsibility for enforcing the policies.

The food-service program may participate in the "Farm to School Program" using locally grown food in school meals and snacks.

No foods or beverages, other than those associated with the District's food-service program, are to be sold during food-service hours.

The District's food service program shall serve only food items and beverages determined by the Food Service Department to be in compliance with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition guidelines. Any competitive food items and beverages that are available for sale to students a la carte in the dining area between midnight and thirty (30) minutes following the end of the last lunch period shall also comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition guidelines, and may only be sold in accordance with Board Policy 8550. Foods and beverages unassociated with the food-service program may be vended in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in Board Policy 8540.

The District Administrator will require that the food service program serve foods in the schools of the District that are wholesome and nutritious and reinforce the concepts taught in the classroom.

The District Administrator is responsible for implementing the food service program in accordance with the adopted nutrition standards and shall provide a report regarding the District's compliance with the standards at one of its regular meetings annually.