

**Business and Non-Instructional Operations****Nutrition Services Charging Policy**

Region 10 recognizes the importance of each student having access to good nutrition throughout the school day. The District's nutrition services program is dedicated to providing good-tasting, nutritious and affordable meals in pleasant surroundings. In addition, the District participates in the National School Lunch program, enabling students who are eligible to receive free and reduced price meals.

Advance Payment for Meals

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that students' meals are paid for in advance or at the time of purchase. The District uses an online, automated prepayment system which allows parents and guardians to make deposits to their child's school meal account. Students may also pay at the register with cash or check at the time of purchase.

Insufficient Funds in Account for Meals

In order to prevent students from missing any meals at school due to insufficient funds in the student's account, the Board approves the establishment of a system to allow students to charge a meal. Charging for meals must be reserved for emergencies and other unplanned occasions when a student does not have money to purchase a meal. Repayment for the charged meal is expected without delay.

Guidelines for Charging

The District's food service program cannot be operated effectively unless parents and guardians pay for meals in advance or at the time of purchase. In addition, federal regulations prohibit the use of funds in the non-profit school food service account from being used to cover the cost of charged meals that have not been paid. Therefore, the Board establishes the following guidelines regarding charging for meals:

- Any student whose account has insufficient funds and does not bring a meal from home may charge up to three meals.
- No a la carte items other than milk may be charged.
- Once a student has accrued a balance for three meals charged, the student will only be offered an alternate (and reimbursable) meal that includes milk, fruit, vegetable and a sandwich. Alternate meals shall be provided until the balance is paid in full. The student's account will be charged for alternate meals.
- Implementation of the alternate meal program shall be monitored to minimize or prevent any potentially stigmatizing impact on students who charge meals.

- Students will not be permitted to charge any meals, regardless of the balance owed, after June 1st of each school year.

#### Communication with Parents and Guardians

The District uses an online, automated prepayment system, which allows parents/guardians to view their child's meal account balance and purchases, receive low-balance notifications, as well as make deposits to their child's school meal account. Negative balance status can be avoided by making a payment in the form of cash, check or by payment to the designated website.

Negative balance letters will be sent home bi-weekly via e-mail to any student owing for 3 meals or more. If parents/guardians do not have a valid email address the negative balance letter will be mailed home.

#### Notice of Policy

This policy shall be included in student handbooks, placed on the District's website, on the website of each school and published at the beginning of each school year at the time information is being distributed regarding free and reduced price meals.

#### Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees.

10-215a Nonpublic school and nonprofit agency participation in feeding programs.

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies, procedures

Operational Memorandum #3-15, State Department of Education, "Federal Register Request for Information: Unpaid Meal Charges"

Operational Memorandum #19-10, State Department of Education, "Unallowable Charges to Non-profit School Food Service Accounts and the Serving of Meals to No-paying Full and Reduced Price Students"

#### Federal statutes:

42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq., National School Lunch Program

7 C.F.R. §§ 210.10, 210.12, 210.33 and 245.8

Section 143 of Public Law 111-296, Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

Policy Adopted: May 9, 2016