

## MEAL CHARGE

### I. Federal Requirement

This policy addresses the requirement for school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which would include, if applicable, the availability of alternate meals.

### II. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Child Nutrition department. The goals of this standard of practice are:

- A. To treat all **students learners** with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- B. To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, **student learners** and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
- C. To establish procedures that are age appropriate.
- D. To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the **student learner**.
- E. To establish a consistent district approach regarding charges and collection of charges.

### III. Scope of Responsibility

- A. The Child Nutrition department **or designee, Business Manager, and Administrative Assistants shall be** is responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the **student's learner's** parent/guardian.
- B. The parent/guardian shall be required to provide **immediate** payment for the child nutrition charges on their account.

### III. Scope of Responsibility

#### A. Payment Options

The Brookings School District will accept the following methods of payment:

- a. Online through E-funds with an **approved** credit or debit card
- b. At a child's school by check or cash
- c. At the District Administration Office by check or cash

#### B. Balance Notifications

The Brookings School District will use the following steps to notify parents/guardians of low account balances:

- a. Families will receive a low balance email **notification, voice** and/or texting notification (pending updated family information is provided to the Child Nutrition office) when family balance is \$20 or less.

- b. The Cashier at each school will notify **students learners** of a low balance when balance is \$15 or less.
- c. Written notification will be issued to families when the balance reaches negative \$5.
- d. Phone calls will be made daily for negative account balances.

### C. Negative Balances

In the case of a negative account balance, the Brookings School District will apply the following procedures:

- a. **Students Learners** may continue to purchase breakfast and lunch meals until the family account balance reaches negative \$25.
  - i. No a la carte purchases will be allowed for any child with a negative lunch balance.
  - ii. If an account reaches an amount greater than negative \$25, **students learners will not be turned away but may be** served an alternate meal option.
- b. Adults and visitors are only allowed to purchase a meal or any additional items if there are adequate funds in the account to cover the cost of the purchases.
- c. If a family balance goes beyond negative \$25, arrangements may be made by contacting the office of the Director of Child Nutrition Services.

### D. Refunds Closing an Account

- a. Refunds of account balances will be provided to a family upon request. The family must provide a name and address to receive the refund check. Checks are mailed to families following the next regular school board meeting once a request is made.
- b. **If a family chooses to donate the remaining funds to Food for Thought, or donate to a family within the district of their choice, it is the responsibility of that family to notify the Child Nutrition Office.**

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