UNPAID MEAL CHARGES – New Policy (EEA)

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.

The intent of this policy is to establish a process and procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meal benefits have insufficient funds to pay for school meals; as well as for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt.

PROCEDURE

1. Students who qualify for free meals shall not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their account.
2. Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service must be provided a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day’s meal, the school food authority (SFA) shall not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.
3. Students without funds to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal can charge their account for breakfast and/or lunch

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1. Students who charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal.
2. There shall not be a maximum amount or number of meals allowed to charge.
3. Adults shall only be allowed to charge meals up to $25 and any additional meal or food item will be refused.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

1. Policy *EEA, Unpaid Meal Charges*, shall be communicated to the household by posting on the Calcasieu Parish School Board (CPSB) website and will be sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year.

1. The policy shall be communicated to all School Nutrition Program (SNP) staff and the staff will receive training as part of their professional development.
2. Documentation of the communication and training plan shall be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

NOTIFYING THE HOUSEHOLD OF NEGATIVE BALANCES

1. The SFA shall notify households of negative balances by a variety of different methods:
   1. School Messenger shall be utilized to send automated messages to parent’s contact numbers. The messages shall be sent once monthly for any negative balance and excessive negative balances. The messages shall differ depending on the situation.
   2. The cafeteria manager shall provide students with printed documentation of negative balances.
   3. A letter from the central office detailing the amount owed and procedure for payment shall be mailed to the parent’s address at $50 negative balance.

* 1. A certified letter shall be mailed from the central office detailing the amount owed and procedure for payment to the parent’s address at $150 negative balance.
  2. The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
  3. Students may be denied participation in extracurricular activities such as prom, homecoming dances, and field trips. The denial of participation shall be at the discretion of the principal.
  4. All unpaid negative balances will be turned over to a collection agency at the end of each school year.
  5. The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
     1. SNP school-based staff shall collect payment for meals at the POS
     2. SNP central office shall contact households
     3. SNP central office may collect payment

Delinquent debt is allowable in the School Nutrition Program and may be carried over to the next successive school year.

ASSISTANCE TO HOUSEHOLDS

Households with questions or needing assistance may contact the school office where their student attends or the School Nutrition Program office at 337-217-4360.

New policy:

Ref: 2 CFR Part 200 Section 143 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; Board minutes

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: <http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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