

## Procedure – Meal Charge

### **Meal Charge Policy**

In order to allow students to receive nutritious meals, prevent over-identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition program, the District will establish a written meal charge process for students eligible for reduced price meals and students that are not eligible for meals. The meal charge policy will be communicated to households each year so that school district employees, families and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges.

**Full Pay and Reduced Rate Students:** will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate each day.

**Free Meal Benefit – All Students:** Free status students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. A la carte purchases must be prepaid.

### **Unpaid Meal Charges**

The District's Meal Charge Policy will also address unpaid meal charges. Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal.

**Parents/Guardians** are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Meals may be paid for in advance via <https://wa-highland.intouchrecepting.com>, or onsite with cash or a check payable to Highland School District. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year. Graduating or withdrawing students will have any remaining meal account balance refunded to them. Student helper volunteers are needed in various capacities and volunteers earn a meal each shift they work.

The District will make reasonable, discrete efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low through use of notices sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year. HJH and HHS students will track their balance with the meal service secretary.

Negative balances not paid will be considered delinquent debt. The District will make reasonable, discrete efforts to collect delinquent (overdue) unpaid meal charges, which is an allowable use of National School Food Service Account (NSFSA) funds, and will coordinate communications with families to resolve the charges. Options may include collection agencies, small claims court or any other collection method permitted by law and consistent with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act.

**High School (grades 9-12):** Unpaid balances may be converted to a fine. All fines must be paid prior to the purchase of privilege items such as dance tickets and/or may be denied the privilege of walking at graduation.

**Elementary and Middle Schools (K-8):** Unpaid balances may be converted to a fine at the end of the school year. Unpaid fines will preclude the posting of the student's subsequent class assignment until such fine is paid.

District employees are not allowed to charge meals.

Adoption Date: **12.18**  
Classification:  
Revised Dates: **08.24;**