

**Business**

**Food Service**

**Charging Policy**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The Board of Education (Board) has an agreement with the Connecticut State Department of Education to participate in one or more school Child Nutrition Programs and accepts full responsibility for providing free, reduced price and meals to elementary and secondary students enrolled in the District's schools. Meals are planned to meet the specified nutrient standards outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture for children based on their age or grade group.

Although not required by law, because of the District's participation in the Child Nutrition Programs, the Board approves the establishment of a system to allow a student to charge a meal.

The Board realizes that funds from the non-profit school food service account, according to federal regulations, cannot be used to cover the cost of charged meals that have not been paid.

Moreover, federal funds are intended to subsidize the meals of children and may not be used to subsidize meals for adults (teachers, staff and visitors). Adults are not allowed to charge meals and shall pay for such meals at the time of service or through pre-paid accounts.

**I. PURPOSE/POLICY:**

The goal of the food service program is to provide students with nutritious foods that will enhance learning. The school nutrition program is an essential part of the education system and by providing good-tasting, nutritious meals in pleasant surroundings; we are helping to teach students the value of good nutrition.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that each child has access to healthy and nutritious lunches, regardless of the socio-economic status of a family. On occasion a child or family may fail to bring to school the necessary resources to secure a lunch meal at school. In those cases, the school shall provide an "alternative meal" to the child and take steps to secure payment for the charges incurred for that meal.

**II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:**

The school district shall work with the food service program, parents, and students to ensure a confidential payment of charges for any meals provided.

**The Food Service Department:** Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district of outstanding balances.

**The School District:** Responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian of a charge incurred by the student. Parent/guardian of students with negative balances will be contacted by the district through school administration or the food service department under report of written letter, electronic e-mail, or phone call to the household.

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**The Parent/Guardian:** Parent/Guardian will be responsible for making immediate payment.

#### **III. CHARGING THE COST OF MEALS:**

If a child fails to bring the necessary funds for a lunch, the student will be allowed to charge up to an accumulated maximum of four meals. When the charges reach the threshold maximum, the student will be provided an “alternative lunch meal,” Until the charges are paid, the student will only be allowed to secure the “alternative lunch meal.” The student will incur a cost for the “alternative lunch meal.”

“**Alternate Meals**”: The use of alternate meals refers to any meal served to a student that is different from the day’s advertised reimbursable meal. Alternate meals are most often provided to those students who have forgotten their meal payment(s) or medium of exchange. Examples of an alternative meal include but are not limited to the following:

- Cheese or Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich, Fruit/Veggie, Milk

For departmental record-keeping, the food service program shall notify the district monthly of all negative balances.

The District may use an 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. Any student whose account has insufficient funds (i.e., is at the charging limit) and does not bring a meal from home may charge meals. When the charge limit is reached, an alternate meal will be provided consisting of one or more of the alternate meal examples mentioned above until the charges are paid in full. If a financial hardship is suspected, the principal shall encourage the family to apply for free/reduced meals anytime during the school year.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes.

- [10-215](#) Lunches, breakfasts & other feeding programs for public school children & employees
- [10-215a](#) Nonpublic school and nonprofit agency participation in feeding programs.
- [10-215b](#) Duties of State Board of Education re feeding programs. Operational Memorandum #19-Operational Memorandum #19-10, State of Connecticut, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
- Unallowable Charges to No-profit School Food Service Accounts and the Serving of Meals to No-paying Full and Reduced Price Students
- National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program; Competitive Foods. (7 CFR Parts 210 and 220, Federal Register, Vol 45 No.20, Tuesday, January 29, 1980, pp 6758-6772

Adopted: 1-14-15