

## **Regulation**

### **Food Services Management - School Nutrition Charges**

**Descriptor Code: EE-R**

Parents or Guardians are responsible to ensure children have an adequate lunch from home or sufficient funds to purchase school meals. We understand that situations arise and a child may not have funds for the day. To ensure students do not go hungry, Pickens County School Administration has a charge policy in place that allows students without adequate funds to charge meals. This benefit is to allow time for the notification of parents to provide the needed funds to cover meals.

#### Meal Charge Policy

- Students will be allowed to charge meals.
- Students who owe for meal charges are not allowed to purchase A la carte or extra items.
- Students may not charge A la carte or extra items. This includes if a student brings a lunch from home and wishes to purchase a milk, it can't be charged.
- Adults (district employees) will be allowed to charge a maximum of \$10.00 to their account. All charges must be paid in full on or before the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the following month.
- School nutrition staff will inform students Grade 5 – 12 that their meal balance is low or delinquent as they come through the serving line.
- Visitors may not charge.

#### Parental Notification

- School Nutrition elementary managers will send home charge notices weekly along with parent correspondence from the school.
- School Nutrition office will send low balance and delinquent meal balance emails weekly to those accounts where email addresses are imported automatically through the point of sale software and the student information software on a regular basis.
- Principals will be provided the list of student charge balances monthly.
- If parents/guardians do not pay for student meals and do not send a lunch after several attempts through email notification; they will be contacted by the School Nutrition County office to work out a payment plan.
- If additional action is required, the parent/guardian will be referred to the principal. At the principal's discretion further referral may be made to a school social worker.
- School Nutrition may seek reimbursement for excessive funds owed through all legal means including a collection agency.

To assist parents, student account balances can be monitored at any time through our online payment program located on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. This service can be used regardless of whether you use the online funding option or send cash or checks directly to the school. We highly recommend you set a low balance alert (\$10 or higher is suggested) to receive an email when funds are low.

If parents/guardians are experiencing financial hardships it is important that they notify the school nutrition director at 706-253-1700 or the principal so that a free/reduced meal application can be completed or other help offered.

It is the goal of the School Nutrition Program (SNP) to eliminate unpaid charges at the end of each academic year. However unpaid student meal charges will be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and SNP staff will continue collection efforts into the next school year.

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