

## **Policy Section: 4-4.1**

### **S.Reg # 4-4.1 Unpaid Meal Charges (tied to Policy 4-4.1 Food Service Management)**

**Background:** USDA has published various documents (SP 57-2016, SP 46-2016) requiring local school food service authorities (SFAs) to have a local meal charge policy in place no later than July 1, 2017.

#### **Guidelines:**

Students that pay for breakfast or lunch at either the reduced rate or regular rate will not be denied a reimbursable meal when they do not have funds in their account or in hand on a given day. In these situations a student will be provided with a reimbursable meal that complies with the guidelines established for schools participating in the offer verses served (OVS) provisions of the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Where a charge balance exists a student may not purchase or charge a prepackaged novelty. Students with a charge balance who wish to pay cash for a reimbursable meal component (milk, vegetable, entrée) may do so and any change from the transaction will be returned to the student unless they wish to apply the change to their account.

#### **Communication:**

The charge policy will be:

- posted on the PCPS school nutrition web page
- student handbook
- student information packet
- given to all students new to PCPS

#### **Notifying the Household of Negative Balance in Student Cafeteria Account**

The student's household will be notified daily via automated call whenever a student has a negative charge balance on their account.

A school food service staff member will personally contact households with a charge balances once the dollar value exceeds \$5.00. If phone contact cannot be made, a letter will be sent. Notifications to households by staff will include a review of the amount of unpaid meal charges, payment arrangements, and availability of applications for free and reduced future meals.

At \$30.00 in charges the Executive Director of Operations or designee will contact the household and review options for satisfying the debt.

#### **Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt**

When a household reaches the charge threshold of \$50.00 and has not made arrangements to pay down the balance, the Executive Director of Finance will initiate a pre-collection services notice to households. Principals will receive a copy of the notice.

Households will receive a Notification/Notice of Adverse Action stating collection procedures have begun, when all other attempts to settle the account have failed.

Unpaid meal charges will be carried over from one year to the next to allow for SFA's to work with individual families to establish longer repayment plans and to continue pursuing collection efforts. Seniors will be required to settle all school related debts prior to graduation.

**Legal References: HHFKA, Public Law 111-296 Dec 13, 2010; Policy Guidance SP 29-2017, SP 23-2017**

**USDA Food and Nutrition Service Ruling**

**Date Issued: July 1, 2017**

**Date Reissued:**

**Approved:**