

WAYNE SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL LUNCH CHARGE POLICY**A. Purpose and Background**

1. The National School Lunch and Breakfast Program are federal programs in which Wayne School District participates. Federally funded programs are subject to the cost principles outlined in Title 2 code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 225, Appendix B which states "bad debts, including losses arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, related collection costs and related legal costs are unallowable." When parents fail to pay for school meals, the school and district can be hurt financially.
2. The purpose of this policy is to explain how Wayne School District will notify parents/guardians about: money owed for student meals; of the district's procedures for providing meals if students' accounts are delinquent; and to assure and remind parents and school employees that students will never be confronted or embarrassed about money owed for school meals.

B. Payments and School Verification

1. A school must verify at some point in each student's meal service, that the meal is reimbursable or non-reimbursable.
2. A school shall credit meal payments from parents to the student's account before the meal period. This assures all funds are accurately applied to meal accounts in advance of students selecting school meals. Schools will apply payments to the purchase of current day's meal first, and the payment of past-due accounts second.
3. If a student/family qualifies for free meals, no payments are due.
4. If a family qualifies for reduced-price meals, the school will charge no more than \$.40 for lunch or \$.30 for breakfast.
5. Parents may make payments to the school online, by mail or hand delivery. Payments should clearly indicate the account to which the funds should be credited (student's name and amount, if several students attend the school). Schools will accept online payment, checks, money orders and/or cash. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, there will be a \$25.00 return check fee added to the amount the parent will then owe the school.

C. Identification of Delinquent Accounts

1. Schools will identify family or student accounts that do not have adequate balances to pay for student meals. Schools will identify these accounts weekly and notify parents by noon on Friday of each week. The school will contact parents by phone, text,

- email, or letter to allow parents to indicate how they wish to make payments. Schools may ask students to take notifications addressed to the parent home with them; however, the school may not tell students to "remind" their parents to send money to the school. It is the parent's responsibility to pay the student's account. Asking students to remind parents is inappropriate.
2. The school will use any of the following options (or other reasonable options) for student meals if a student's meal account is inadequate:
 - a. Student may bring a sack meal from home.
 - b. Schools will notify parents that the school will offer students whose accounts are delinquent an "alternate meal." Schools will give parents at least a 24 hour notice before giving students alternate meals. The school shall maintain documentation of parent notice.
 - i. "Alternate meal" means a meal served to a student that is different than the meals served to other students because the student does not have adequate funds in the student's lunch account. The alternate meal, such as a fruit and milk, allows the student to have something to eat while limiting the cost to the school lunch program. Each student will be charged for this alternate meal at the exact cost to the district. For example, milk is \$.30 and the fruit would be approximately \$.25. This would make the alternate meal approximately \$.55.
 - c. Students will be contacted before lunch on the day they are being given an alternate meal and told they will be given a sack lunch that will contain a fruit and milk before they enter the lunch line. The school will take such actions as discretely and sensitively as possible so as not to embarrass the student.
 3. The school is not required to provide a meal at no cost if a student does not qualify for a free meal. Because federal funds may not be used for the expenses of these meal, the school must use state, local or other funds to cover the cost of the meals. The school will provide notice to parents at designated times during the school year of the school's policy for providing meals to students when accounts are delinquent or when delinquent at \$0.00 amount. If a student's account is delinquent, the school may offer the student an alternate meal. The Wayne School District will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in providing meals to students and notifying parents.

D. Delinquent Balances and School Procedures

1. Schools will notify parents of students with delinquent balances in their school lunch accounts by such methods as:
 - a. E-mail or phone text to the parent;
 - b. Written notice sent to the parent by mail or carried home by the student in a sealed envelope;
 - c. Telephone conversation with the parent.

2. If parents have been notified, no payment is received, and the amount owed exceeds \$25.00, the account may be turned over to a collection agency (no federal funds may be used for the collection of funds). Schools will notify parents at least twice annually concerning their procedures for the collection of past-due accounts.
3. The school may complete an application for free/reduced-price meals on behalf of the parents, if school personnel have knowledge of the parent's financial circumstances and parents give permission. The school will notify parents that an application has been completed on their behalf.
4. If a student repeatedly has no money in the student's school lunch account and no student meals are provided from home, school officials will consider the circumstances in the home (e.g., potential abuse or neglect, homelessness, etc.) and may contact the Wayne School District social worker and/or Child Protective Services.
5. Schools may use collection agencies to collect on delinquent accounts. They may also set aside or raise funds which may be used for payment of delinquent accounts. Parent organizations may hold fundraisers and individuals may donate funds to be used for such accounts. Schools will determine and notify all parents of the school's standards for paying for students' lunches with school discretionary funds and/or using collection agencies.

Approved in Board Meeting August 5, 2014

