

MEAL CHARGE POLICY

I. FEDERAL REQUIREMENT

The purpose of this policy is to address the need for school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which would include, if applicable, the availability of alternate meals. Because all students in participating schools may receive reimbursable school meals, all SFAs must have a policy in place for children who are participating at the reduced price or paid rate, but either do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. Such a policy ensures that school food service professionals, school administrators, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations in these situations.

You can find more information about this US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requirement at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges>.

II. PURPOSE OF POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of this standard of practice are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, student and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible
- To establish policies that are age appropriate
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges

III. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- The food service department, Business Manager, Administrative Assistants: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the student's parent/guardian.
- The Parent/Guardian: Immediate payment

IV. ADMINISTRATION

- Families are encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits. Applications are available in the school business office or on the school website www.bigstonecity.k12.sd.us

- Families are encouraged to pre-pay for meals and money is accepted in the school business office daily for payments on the day of service. Payments may also be mailed to 655 Walnut Street, Big Stone City, SD 57216

- **Preschool – Elementary Students:** Electronic notices on negative balance accounts are sent via email to the parent(s)/guardian(s) email address on file daily. Once the family reaches \$50 delinquent, child(ren) will be offered an alternate meal.
 - a. Calls on delinquent accounts are made at least weekly, if not more as time allows throughout the week, to try to collect payment.
 - b. All delinquent accounts at the beginning of June of the current school year will be subject to collections for payment.
 - c. If a child has money to purchase a reduced price or paid meal at the time of the meal service, the child must be provided a meal. SFAs may not use the child's money to repay previously unpaid charges if the child intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

- **Middle School Students:** Electronic notices on negative balance accounts are sent via email to the parent(s)/guardian(s) email address on file daily. Once the family reaches \$50 delinquent, child(ren) will be offered an alternate meal.
 - d. Calls on delinquent accounts are made at least weekly, if not more as time allows throughout the week, to try to collect payment.
 - e. All delinquent accounts at the beginning of June of the current school year will be subject to collections for payment.
 - f. If a child has money to purchase a reduced price or paid meal at the time of the meal service, the child must be provided a meal. SFAs may not use the child's money to repay previously unpaid charges if the child intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

- For lunch, the child(ren) will be discreetly told that they will be offered an alternate meal of a sandwich and a carton of milk during the time the reimbursable meal is denied.

- Patrons are expected to pay at beginning of point of service. Any patron whose lunch account is \$50 delinquent in payment will be denied further credit until the account is settled or satisfactory payment is made. No charging of any reimbursable meals will be allowed. No alternate breakfast will be offered.

- Families may contact the school business office at 605-862-8108 to discuss payment plan options.

1st Reading-7/27/2017

2nd Reading-8/15/2017

Date Adopted-8/15/2017

Last Revised-