**3012**

**School Meal Program and Meal Charges**

**Meal Program.** The school district will make a school meal program available to students. The cost of the program will be determined by the board of education so as to make the program as nearly self-supporting as possible. With board approval, the district may contract with a private company or corporation for the management and/or provision of the program.

The district will notify the families with children attending school of the current guidelines for free or reduced-price school meals. A copy of the complete regulations and procedures regarding reduced-price and free meals shall be available in the office of the superintendent.

**Meal Charge Policy.** The district will notify students and their families of the policy for **Charged Meals**, meaning meals received by a student when the student does not have money in hand or in his or her food account. This policy applies to students who receive meals at the free, reduced, or full rates.

Notice of this policy must be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the school during the school year. Notice may be provided through the student handbook, student registration materials, online portal used to access student accounts, direct mailing or e-mail, newsletter, the district website, and/or any other appropriate means. Notice of this policy will also be provided all school staff responsible for the enforcement of it, including food service professionals responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, staff involved in notifying families of low or negative balances, and other staff involved in enforcing any aspect of this policy.

The district’s policy on charged meals is:

Food service charge privileges are denied any student (regular price or reduced price) who is delinquent in his/her payments until such time as the family account is brought current. When the account is delinquent, there will be an optional offering, or the student may bring lunch from home. The opportunity to order second entrees will be denied to free-priced students if their family account is delinquent until the account is brought current.

If a student has a negative or zero balance on their lunch account the student and the parent will be notified at the end of the day that the student will be given credit for one meal. If the family doesn’t bring the account current by the end of the following business day, the student will either need to bring a sacked lunch or eat an alternate meal provided by the school. Family’s accounts will be debited for the alternate meal provided by the school.

**Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt**

The school district is required to make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges. The building principal or his or her designee will contact households about unpaid meal charges and notify them again of the availability of the free and reduced meal program and/or establish payment plans and due dates by telephone, e-mail, or other written or oral communication. If these collection efforts are unsuccessful, the school district may pursue any other methods to collect delinquent debt as allowed by law.

Collection efforts may continue into a new school year.

In the event that the Nebraska Department of Education develops a state-level meal charge policy, it shall supersede that portion of this policy.

Adopted on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Revised on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_