

Sandusky County Board of Developmental Disabilities Business Operations Procedure for Unpaid School Meal Charges

Sandusky County Board of Developmental Disabilities Food Service Program recognizes that adequate nutrition is essential to students' mental, physical, and academic growth. All children (grades PS-12) participating in the National School Lunch program (NSLP), whether at a free, reduced, or paid rate, will receive a lunch meal that meets USDA requirements, regardless of whether the students have sufficient money in the meal-charge accounts or cash-in-hand to pay for the cost of the meal at the time of the service.

This procedure is established to provide consistent meal charge account procedures throughout the Sandusky County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

I. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

Parents/Guardians are responsible for paying for all their student's meal charges. Uncollected meal charges shall be handled the same as any other school debt. Repeated failure to address meal charges may result in referral to an agency for collection. All meals eaten before a free or reduced-price meal application is processed or approved are the responsibility of the parent/guardian and must be paid for in a timely manner. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to send in cash or check for student meals.

II. Business Office

The Business Office is responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the School Supervisor of outstanding balances. The School Supervisor will issue notice to parent(s)/guardian whose student(s) has a delinquent account. Weekly, the Business Office will run a report showing all student accounts with a negative food account balance. The School Supervisor will provide this notification letter to the respective school instructor which will send the notice to the parent(s)/guardian.

Fremont City Schools is responsible for providing a meal which meets the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requirements to all students.

If a student has a negative balance of \$20.00 in his/her student account and does not have adequate money in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service, an alternative meal of the SCBDD's choice will be provided at no cost to the student. After three no-cost alternative meals, all alternative meals will be charged against the student's account.

III. School

The school is responsible for supporting the SCBDD in debt collection activities. Unpaid meal charges will be carried over at the end of the school year as delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the next school year.

Federal guidelines prohibit the Business Office from writing off bad debts as result of charged meals. Every effort will be made to collect for unpaid meals. While not all inclusive, these measures may include the following.

- a. An email sent to the parent(s)/guardian.
- b. Business Office or School Supervisor will contact parent(s)/guardian by phone.

- c. Business Office or School Supervisor sends notices to place in teachers' mailboxes for students.
- d. Business Office or School Supervisor will send letters home from the Sandusky County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

When a student repeatedly comes to school without a meal from home or money to participate in the school meal program, such requests may indicate the family's need for free or reduced-price meals. School administrators should work with the family to apply for school meal benefits. School meal status is treated as a confidential matter and should not be a consideration for families considering applying for assistance. School administrators should consider if circumstances in the home warrant contacting social workers or Child Protective Services.

This policy and procedure for unpaid meal charges is designed to ensure all students who want to eat a school meal receive a meal without impediment(s). This policy and procedure will be reviewed with all school assigned personnel.