Date Issued 07-01-2017

Effective Date 07-01-2017

**Estelline School District Meal Charge Policy**

# 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>.

# 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

# 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

# ADMINISTRATION

1. 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.](http://www.)estellineschool.com.
2. 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. Written notification of prepayment options occurs at the beginning of each school year, is given to each new transfer student, is posted on the school website, and is included in the student handbook.
3. Families will be notified of the school Unpaid Meal Charge Policy in writing before the school year begins and with each new transfer student. This policy will also be posted on the Estelline School Website.
4. **Elementary, Junior High, and High School Students:** The District has a meal account policy that no more than 10 meals per student may be charged before a student will be offered an alternate meal. When account balances become low (<$30) and/or negative, automated emails will be sent to the email address listed in infinite campus. When an account balance becomes negative, daily phone calls to the parent are made until the account becomes current. Once an account is negative, a student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items. If an account is negative at least 10 meals per student, a cheese sandwich and milk may be discreetly served until the account is brought current.
5. Automated emails and calls on delinquent accounts are made on a daily basis to try to collect payment.
6. All delinquent accounts at the beginning of June of the current school year will be subject to collections for payment.
7. 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.
8. Families may contact the school business office at 605-873-2201 to discuss payment plan options.