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Code C12

Meal Charge Policy for Lamoille North Supervisory Union

- I. **Purpose** - The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent procedures for the Lamoille North Supervisory Union to provide meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and to collect unpaid meal debt.

General Statement of Policy -

- A. The Lamoille North Supervisory Union recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.
- B. It is the policy of Lamoille North Supervisory Union to offer high-quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry.
- C. Payments to student accounts can be made in the following manner:
- 1) Visiting any schools' website and creating an account on My School Bucks.
 - 2) Bringing payment to your student's school office.
 - 3) Sending your child with cash or checks to their school's cafeteria.
(Checks are preferred over cash.)
- D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits at any time during the school year. Free and Reduced applications are distributed to households by mail prior to the first day of school, as well as sent home to students on the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the applications as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school office during regular business hours and online at www.LNSU.org. If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year.
- 1) Households who apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced-price meal without an approved application or Direct Certification information on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with the approving official at the school to see if the application has been received.
 - 2) Households who are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits will receive a notification of eligibility letter from the school based on Direct Certification by the State.
 - 3) Students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals may receive a breakfast and a lunch each day at no charge.

Meal Charge Policy –

- A. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals:
 - Students in grades PreK-12 will be allowed to charge up to \$15.00.
 - Students will always be provided a meal.
 - All negative balances must be paid prior to the end of the school year. Any remaining balances will be carried over to the next school year.
- B. Students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals will always be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts.
- C. Students who are eligible for paid meals and has 'cash in hand' at the time of meal service will be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts. The 'cash in hand' will not be applied to past due accounts.
- D. Students with an overdrawn account are not allowed to charge a la carte items.
- E. Students with an overdrawn account, who are subsequently found to be eligible for free and reduced meals, may have their charges retroactively corrected accordingly.

Account Status Notifications –

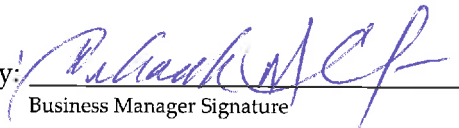
- A. Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in the student's account to cover weekly meal purchases. To keep track of funds:
 - Families can check their account balance online via My School Bucks. (You must create an account through a link provided on your school's website.)
 - Families may contact the Director of School Nutrition Services.
- B. If the student's account requires action:
 - Parents will be notified when the student account reaches a balance of \$5.00 or less.
 - Reminders will be sent to parents once the student account reaches \$0.
 - Weekly reminders will be sent to parents whose children have a negative account balance.
 - Invoices for payment will be sent via U.S. Mail when a child reaches a negative balance of \$10.00.
 - Invoices for payment will be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested, when a child reaches the maximum negative balance of \$30.00.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt -

When the student balance is past due, the following collection activities will be followed, PreK-12:

- The Director of School Nutrition Services will contact the building principal if no payment is received.
- The building principal or designee will contact the household to discuss the requirement of the family to provide meals for the student.
- All funds owed to the school nutrition program will be paid in full on the last day of school.
- The Board of Directors may submit past due balances to collection agencies.

Approved by:


Business Manager Signature

Deborah A. Clark
Printed Name