MEAL CHARGE POLICY

1. Purpose/Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures within the Elgin/New Leipzig School District. Pursuant to State and Federal Regulations all Child Nutrition Programs on the NSLP are required to “break even” at the close of each school year. The goals of this policy will ensure the completion of this goal on an annual basis. To that end, this policy is:

* To ensure that all students have a healthy meal that no child goes hungry
* To treat all students with dignity and confidentiality in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
* To support positive and clear communication among staff, administrators, teachers, students and the parent/guardian
* To establish fair practices to be used throughout the school district
* To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student
* To establish a consistent practice regarding chargers and collection of charges

1. Scope of Responsibility

The School District Office:

* Responsible for maintaining charge records
* Notifying students/parents/guardians of outstanding balances by Phone, Email, Text, and Correspondence sent home from the office
* Assist Child Nutrition with collection of outstanding balances by sending home balance sheets generated by the Food Service Department

The Parent/Guardian:

* Maintain a positive balance in your child’s lunch account
* Apply for meal subsidy to avoid outstanding balances
* Contact the School to resolve any issues with your child’s lunch account

1. Policy and Procedure
2. All students K-12 will not be allowed to have a negative balance of more than $10.00 on their account at any given time. Hot lunch prices shall apply as per policy set by the school board on an annual basis. Under no circumstances will charges be allowed for the entire school year and then paid for at the end of the year. All balances must be kept current according to this policy.
3. Only Federally designated reimbursable meals can be charged to an account with negative funds amount of between $0.00 and to $10.00.
4. Once the child’s account is nearly $0.00, the student will be told that their funds are running low, and will be asked to let parents/guardians know to add more funds to the account to avoid going into the negative.
5. Once the account goes below $0.00 the student will be told that if they get to -$10.00 they will receive an “Alternative” meal (see below), if they are on PAID or REDUCED status until the account is in good standing.
6. When the account has reached the -$10.00 limit, the PAID or REDUCED student will be given a designated menu alternate. Sample: Cheese sandwich, vegetable, fruit, and milk or the parent/guardian may send a lunch from home with the student.
7. This meal will be rung in the register as an “Alternative” meal (in order for the district to receive federal reimbursement at least cover the cost of the meal.)
8. The School, Parent/guardian, and Student will be informed of their excessive balance until the account is brought back into good standing. This will be done by Phone, Email, Text, and Correspondence sent home from the school district office.
9. No la a Carte or Snack Items will be allowed to be charged to an account with insufficient funds, even if the child offers to pay in cash, until the account is brought current.
10. When a parent/guardian has applied for free/reduced meal, but before the school has been notified of eligibility, the student will be given an alternative meal.
11. If the parent/guardian application for FREE meal status is approved then the balance owed for unpaid meals shall be forgiven, only in the current month of the current year. Prior years balances must be paid for the account to be considered current.
12. If the application for REDUCED meal status is approved, the student/parent/guardian is still responsible to pay the full account balance and bring the account into good standing.
13. If the account is not current by May 15 of each year, all charging by students or parents/guardians for meals, will be cut off and the account must be paid in full, the meals paid for daily or packed lunch prepared by the parent/guardian and brought daily by the student and:
    1. Parents/guardians will be sent a written request for “Payment in Full”
    2. All charges must be paid before the last day of School each Year
    3. Seniors must pay all charges before graduation in order to participate in the graduation ceremony.
    4. Refunds will be allowed if the account has a positive balance when the student graduates, moves or qualifies for free/reduced meals upon proper application and approval.

All situations under this policy will be addressed on an individual basis by office personnel and food service staff in the best interests of the child and school district.

End of Elgin/New Leipzig School District Board Regulation IB-BR Adopted:06/2017