



CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES

Brandon Valley School District 49-2

2001 South Sioux Boulevard, Brandon, SD 57005-1705

(605) 582-3926

MEAL CHARGE POLICY

(Updated) July 2023

I. FEDERAL REQUIREMENT

- A. Information provided here is to clearly communicate the meal charge practices in the Brandon Valley School District (BVSD) Child Nutrition Department.

II. PURPOSE OF POLICY

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Child Nutrition Department. The goals of this policy are:
 - i. To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
 - ii. To support positive situations with District staff, business policies, students, and parents/guardians to the maximum extent possible.
 - iii. To establish policies that are appropriate across all grade levels.
 - iv. To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
 - v. To establish a consistent District policy regarding foodservice charges and collection of foodservice charges.

III. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Child Nutrition Department: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the student's parent/guardian of negative balances.
- B. Parent/Guardian: Responsible for immediate payment.

IV. MEAL CHARGE STANDARD PRACTICE

- A. Families are encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits and will be further encouraged if accounts fall negative.
- B. Families will begin receiving low balance alerts when an account reaches \$15.00 if they are activated in the family account. If a family is not receiving them, the Child Nutrition office will ensure these notifications are turned on in payor accounts when letters are sent home (see F). Accounts greater than **-\$25.00** will be checked for these notifications once per week, minimum.
- C. Families are encouraged to pre-pay for meals. Payments are accepted daily at every school (cash or check) or can be made online via a family's Family Access/Skyward Account.
- D. Families will have access to the district's Unpaid Meal Charge Policy via the Child Nutrition website.
- E. Students will be verbally notified of negative balances daily until negative balance is paid.
- F. When a balance reaches **-\$25.00**, a letter will be sent to the account's primary payor as a final notice. If payment is not received within 7 days of this letter, students will be offered an alternative meal at lunch that meets USDA meal pattern requirements at no additional charge to the family. Additionally (if payment is not received within 7 days of receiving this letter) students with lunch from home will not be permitted to purchase milk.
- G. Emails may be sent to parents/guardians of students with negative balances.
- H. Phone calls may be made to parents/guardians of students with negative balances.
- I. Ala carte purchases will not be allowed if funds are not available in a student's account. This includes morning milk and snack (Elementary). Families have access to put purchasing restrictions on student accounts under the Foodservice tab in Family Access/Skyward. The only ala carte purchase allowed with a negative balance is a single milk at lunch only if a student brings a meal from home. However, if the negative account warrants a written letter (as outlined in section F above), no milk purchase will be permitted.
- J. Any funds provided at point of sale will be used towards the unpaid meal balance. If a student provides money for ala carte purchases, the funds must cover unpaid meal debt before ala carte purchases are allowed. Cashiers will notify students of this prior to taking money.
- K. Unpaid meal charges will be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the new school year.
- L. Any BVSD staff member with an account balance of **\$0.00** or more (negative), will not be permitted to purchase a meal or any ala carte items. If students are attached to a staff member's account, students will be fed a meal (following standard meal charge policy guidelines).