

LONE OAK ISD FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES DEPARTMENT
2018 / 2019 MEAL CHARGE POLICY

Dear Buffalo Families,

All meals served by the Food & Nutrition Services Department (FNSD) meet the requirements as established by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Texas Department of Education. The school meal programs aim to provide nutritious meal to children during the school day. Children may receive breakfast and lunch at no charge if they are categorically eligible for free or if they qualify for free meals based on Federal poverty guidelines. Children who do not qualify for free meals may purchase meals at a subsidized cost, at either the reduced price or paid rate. In doing so, the following Meal Charge Policy is to be strictly enforced on every campus.

RE: Charges:

- *Students will be allowed a maximum of \$5.00 in meal charges.
- *Students will be notified when they exceed the \$5.00 meal charge.
- *Notification will be communicated privately with individual families about their students' outstanding balance by letter, email (if provided), or phone call.
- *FNSD will continue to serve students who are unable to pay for the regular reimbursable meal at the time of service, while incurring the cost of said meal.
- *FNSD will request students who have exhausted the maximum allowable charges to surrender the meal and phone their parent(s) in an effort to allow opportunity to apply funds to students' prepaid meal account at both the middle and high school campuses.
- *Students must pay their lunch account balance before making ala-carte purchases.
- *Students must have money on their accounts to purchase any ala carte items, extra entrees or extra meals. No student, regardless of eligibility, will be allowed to purchase these items if they have a negative balance on their account. Students must check with cashier to make sure they have money on their account before getting these items.
- *Student accounts may remain unpaid for a maximum period of two weeks before enhanced methods of collection will be initiated.
- *All Charging will stop two weeks prior to the last day of school.
- *Students are not allowed to purchase another students meal at any time.
- *Due to mandated requirements for students, **All ADULTS** will be expected to use the same guidelines.

Collection Procedures:

- *It is the responsibility of the parent to know the balance of their child's lunch account.
- *At a minimum, Negative Balance Notices will be sent home when the student reaches -\$5.00 on their account. It is the responsibility of the parent and the student to make sure the parent receives the written notice from their student. This letter will state the balance on the account.
- *Any student who has a balance of -\$5.00 or more will not be offered a courtesy meal¹.
- *Progressive steps in collection of funds due:
 1. Negative letter is sent home once student reaches -\$5.00
 2. A system generated email is sent when student reaches -\$5.00
 3. Email or phone call is made by FNSD when student balance has remained negative for a period of two week².
 4. Documented collection methods that have not been successful in obtaining payment for student outstanding balances will be referred to administration at the attending campus³.
 5. Administration will attempt to obtain payment for student outstanding balances and convey that this may impact the students' ability to receive academic awards as well as their report cards.
- *It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide current contact information for all methods of contact.
- *INSUFFICIENT FUNDS: There will be a \$20.00 charge for all returned checks. Payment to cover returned checks must be made in cash at the administrative offices. After several attempts have been made to collect funds to no avail, students' account will be flagged with a "Do Not Accept Checks" alert.

If you are having difficulty providing for your students' lunch, please call the Food & Nutrition Services Department at 903-662-5151x2255 to discuss options for you and your student. We feel it is important for students to have a healthy lunch as it helps promote a positive learning environment for all.

Ways to add money and track your student lunch accounts:

- *Online at www.loisd.net –follow the LunchMoneyNow link on the home page. There is a \$2.50 non-refundable fee to use this service. Conveniently check payments on account, balances and transactions. Parents are requested to please sign up for low balance alerts by text message or email-these are free features of this service.

*It takes approximately 30 minutes for deposited funds to receive verification and be added to student funds using this method.

*Check: Put the check in an envelope with student ID number, first and last name and what it is for.

*Cash: (We prefer checks since cash cannot be tracked and verified) Put the cash in an envelope with student ID number, first and last name and what it is for.

Additional Considerations:

*Unpaid student accounts may be brought current by funding with Benevolent Fund monies.

*Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing in the event Benevolent Funds were used to deal with overdue balances.

*Unenrolled students with negative balances; every effort will be made to bring the account current by contacting parent/guardian before grades are transferred. If this is unsuccessful, Benevolent Funds will be used to cover the overdue balance.

*Withdrawing students with positive balances; it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to request, preferably in writing, at the time of departure the amount of funds available from the student account. These funds may be made payable at regular intervals as determined by the accounts payable office, transferred to another student still attending the district, or donated to the Benevolent Fund, once all charges to students' account have been satisfied.

*Unenrolled students with positive balances; for all paid accounts with any remaining funds that have not been requested for a period of 60 days, after date of withdrawal on record, will be transferred to the Benevolent Fund. All funds remaining in student accounts which were free or reduced must be refunded to the parent or guardian.

*The Benevolent Fund is made up of community monetary gifts, designated student funds, and the general fund.

*A copy of this policy will be given to all students at the time of enrollment or at the beginning of the new school year in addition to the Application for Free/Reduced Meals.

*A copy of this policy shall be present in the student handbook for each campus.

*A copy of this policy will be distributed at such a time as deemed necessary by FNSD with communication regarding student overdue account balances and the collection thereof.

*A copy of this policy will be made available to all staff and included in the staff handbook.

*A copy of this policy will be posted on www.loisd.net site, in the FNSD section.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding which will ensure the success of our district food service program.

Lance Campbell
Superintendent

¹ Courtesy meal consists of cheese, cold cut, or peanut butter sandwich, fruit, and milk, which is not a reimbursable meal through the USDA National School Lunch Program.

² Provided resources to accomplish said task(s) are available.

³ Administration at attending campus includes, but not limited to: campus secretary, assistant to the secretary, vice principal, campus counselor, and principal.

⁴ Form available from the office of FNS Director.

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