

## **Rochester School District Meal Charge Policy**

In order to allow students to receive nutritious meals, prevent over-identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition program, the District will establish a written meal charge process for students eligible for reduced price meals and students that are not eligible for meals. The meal charge policy will be communicated to households each year so that school district employees, families and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges.

### **Unpaid Meal Charges**

The District's Meal Charge Policy will address unpaid meal charges. Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. The District will provide alternate meals meeting federal and state requirements to students who owe \$5.00 or more in allowed meal charges to their student account and cannot pay out of pocket for a meal. The District will meet a student's special dietary needs compliant with a student's Section 504 plan. Students who have a negative meal account balance will not be permitted to purchase a la carte items.

The District will make reasonable, discrete efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low through use of automated call notification system and Skyward Family Access. Students will be told verbally by the cashier when they have a negative balance. Negative balances of more than \$50.00 not paid will be considered delinquent debt and will be turned over to the superintendent or designee for collection. The District will make reasonable, discrete efforts to collect delinquent (overdue) unpaid meal charges, which is an allowable use of National School Food Service Account (NSFSA) funds, and will coordinate communications with families to resolve the charges. Options may include collection agencies, small claims court or any other collection method permitted by law and consistent with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act.

District employees may use a charge account for meals, but may charge no more than \$10.00 to their account. When an account reaches this limit, the employee will not be allowed to charge additional meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid.