

Immaculate Conception Unpaid Meal Charge and Debt Collection

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent district practices for the provision of meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

II. General Statement of Policy

- A. Immaculate Conception's goal is to provide nutritious meals to students to promote healthy eating habits and enhance learning as well as maintain the financial integrity of the National School Breakfast and Lunch program and eliminate stigmatization of children who are unable to pay meal charges.
- B. It is the policy of Immaculate Conception to offer *breakfast and/or lunch* meals that meet state and federal guidelines.
- C. Breakfast and/or lunch meals may be paid by check or cash.
- D. Families may apply for free/reduced-price meal benefits anytime during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to all families in the district prior to the student's first day of classes. In addition, applications are available at the school office Monday through Friday 8:00AM – 3:30PM. If household income or size change, families can apply for meal benefits anytime during the school year.

III. Charge Policy

- A. If the student or family account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals, breakfast and/or lunch meals will be charged and families will be billed.
 - *Students will be allowed to charge their meals.*
 - *Students in elementary grades will always be given a meal.*
 - *If the student meal account is overdrawn, a student will be allowed to charge breakfast/lunch meals.*
 - *All students will be provided a meal regardless of meal account status.*
 - *Students with an overdrawn account are not allowed to charge ala carte items.*
- B. Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid food service accounts. When a student eligible for PAID meals has "cash in hand" to pay for a meal, the student will be served a meal regardless of unpaid foodservice accounts. The "cash in hand" will not be applied towards past due balances.

IV. Notification of Account Status

- *Families can check their student's meal account balance via telephone.*
- *Families can contact the office for account balances.*
- *The Food Service Department will send a monthly billings to all parents advising them of the student meal account balance(s).*
- *Households will be regularly apprised via mail of student meal account balances.*

V. Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt

When the student meal balance is negative, the following collection actions will be taken:

- i) Elementary: Pre-school – Grade 5
 - ii) Middle School: Grades 6-8
- *The Foodservice staff will contact the household to request payment.*
 - *The Food and Nutrition staff will contact the building principal if no payment is received. The principal will contact the parent/guardian to determine an appropriate solution.*
 - *The building principal or their designee will contact the family and review with them their responsibility to provide meals for their student.*
 - *Assistance from the county social services may be requested by the school if parents refuse to provide meals or pay for school prepared meals for their children.*
 - *The expectation is all fees owed to the district will be paid in full on the last day the student will be attending classes.*

Source: Immaculate Conception School

Reviewed: 06-30-17 by V. Zelinka FM

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