

Board Policy #8520 – Food Service Meal Charging

Schools are not required to provide meals to non-paying full priced or reduced price students; although, it is the school meal program's primary purpose to feed students. It is a local decision whether to allow meal charges. Greenfield-Central emphasizes that students should not undergo hardship at school as a result of parents/guardians failing to pay for their meals. In setting policy the program requirements prohibit schools from denying meals for disciplinary reasons, if the child has money in hand, and for any designated free student. If there is a situation that prevents parents/guardians from paying for food, they should contact the principal of their building. We strongly discourage meal charges as this affects the Food Service Program and the child. Parents are encouraged to prepay for meals and allow receipt of any change due at the register into the student's account.

The district policy is as follows:

- Elementary (K-6) may charge. Notification will be sent to parents/guardians concerning the status of their child's accounts.
- Secondary (7-12) may not charge.
- Adults may not charge.
- A la carte items may not be charged.
- Staff should not provide money to students.
- Balances, positive or negative, will transfer to the new school year.
- All charges must be paid within 20 school days; after that time the parent/guardian may be assigned to collections. Any arrears in excess of \$50 will be assigned to collections on a monthly basis. Any costs associated with collections will be passed on to the parent.

COLLECTION AND FORGIVENESS OF DEBT

The Board understands it is required to collect all monies owed to it by patrons, employees, parents and students, including money owed through student lunch accounts, textbook accounts, extracurricular accounts, or other accounts. This would also include checks that are returned as having "non-sufficient funds" that require proper payment and an additional \$20 fee to cover bank charges and administrative overhead. Every effort should be made by the school administration to collect the monies owed to the school corporation including collection procedures. Such efforts should be documented by school administration before the debt is forgiven, waived, or written off of the school corporation accounts.

The school corporation may forgive, waive, or write-off all or a portion of the debt if one of the following conditions is met:

- A. The school administration determines that the student or the parent or guardian of the student is unable to pay the debt;
- B. The payment of the debt could impact the health or safety of the student;
- C. The cost to pursue and collect the debt from the student and his/her parents would cost more than the potential total debt collected; or
- D. There are mitigating circumstances as determined by the superintendent that preclude the collection of the debt.

Every decision to forgive, waive, or write-off a debt should be documented and include the specific facts for the decision relating to one of the above stated reasons.

The superintendent may develop regulations addressing specific situations relating to the above conditions.

In the cases where a positive balance exists in the accounts, every effort should be made by the school administration to return the positive balance to the account holder when the person is no longer in the school corporation. If attempts made to refund the balance have been unsuccessful, the balance should be transferred to the corresponding school fund or if such transfer is not appropriate, to the school corporation general fund.