

2016-17 Dade County School Nutrition Charge Policy

I. Purpose

The Dade County School Nutrition Program is committed to serving healthy, nutritious meals to our students daily. However, unpaid lunch charges place a large financial burden on our food services budget. This policy establishes consistent meal account procedures for Dade County Schools. The intent of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements, while providing accountability of outstanding student meal accounts.

II. Scope of Responsibility

Dade County School Nutrition Department

Dade County School Nutrition is responsible for maintaining charge records, and notifying parents and school principals of outstanding balances. In addition, they will ensure each student receives a free and reduced-price meal application, approve qualifying students and follow-up with families as needed. School nutrition managers will send low balance notices home with students weekly.

School Principal/Administration

Principals and/or administrators are responsible for contacting parents/guardians when balances are consistently negative and collecting balances owed. Federal guidelines prohibit school nutrition from carrying a negative balance at the close of the year. Therefore, principals must ensure all charges are cleared at the end of the school year. In addition, they will communicate the employee charge policy to their respective staff.

Parents or Guardians

Parents must provide immediate payment or complete the free and reduced-price meal application.

III. Administration

Dade County Students

Students may not charge over 3 meals to their account. Free and reduced status students receive one breakfast and one lunch at the free or reduced rate per day. A la carte purchases are not included and must be prepaid. When a student's account balance reaches zero, no a la carte items will be sold to the student. Parents will receive a letter, as well as a phone call as notification of the low balance. A text message will also be sent to the parent as a payment reminder. If a student's balance is consistently negative, school administration will investigate the situation further and take action as needed.

Dade County School Employees

School employees may not charge meals. Meals must be prepaid or paid at the point of service. Staff may prepay their account at anytime during the school year. School Cafeteria managers/cashiers will notify staff when their balance is nearing zero. When an employee's balance reaches zero, no meals or a la carte items will be charged to that employee.