

PHILLIPS

Programs for Children and Families

2023-2024 Meal Charge Policy

This policy will establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the school division. The goals of this policy are:

- To treat all students with dignity regarding meal accounts
- To support positive situations with division staff, division business policies, student and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible
- To establish policies that are age appropriate
- To establish a consistent policy regarding charges and collection of charges.

Policy

1. Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
2. Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service must be provided a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day's meal, PHILLIPS Program will not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.
3. Students will not be made to work for their meal or to work to settle any unpaid meal charges. In addition, students will not be labeled with a hand stamp, sticker, wristband, or identified in any other way if they cannot pay for a meal or have an unpaid meal charge.
4. Students without funds to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal are allowed to charge lunch.
5. Students are allowed to charge 5 meals *AND/OR* \$25.
6. Students who charge will receive a reimbursable meal.

Communicating the Policy

1. The written meal charge policy will be communicated to the household by way of Parent Packets and School Website.

2. PHILLIPS Programs staff will receive training on meal charge policy and a record of the training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
3. Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

Notification to the Household of Low or Negative Balance in Student Cafeteria Account

1. The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account falls below \$5 and once the account falls into a negative balance.
2. PHILLIPS Programs will notify households of low or negative balances via email, phone call and/or low balance letters sent home with students.
3. Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, current account balance, acceptable payment options/procedures, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.
4. The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
5. The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
 - a. PHILLIPS Programs school-based staff will collect payment for meals at POS (*point of service*).
 - b. Teachers and/or Food Program Manager will contact households.

Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt

1. Parents will be notified directly via phone and/or email if students have an outstanding debt.
2. The household will be notified after 7 days before repayment request.
3. Efforts to collect delinquent and/or bad debt will be handled by:
 - a. Send First and Second Letters
 - b. Phone calls
 - c. Notice of Adverse Action/potential collections
 - d. Consequence

Assistance to Households

1. Households with questions or needing assistance may contact: Roshell Dews Roshell.Dews@phillipsprograms.org , 703-941-8810 ext. 250
2. Household will receive a Notification/Notice of Adverse Action stating collection procedures have begun.

