

## MEAL CHARGES

EARLHAM SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

CODE NO. 701.5

In accordance with state and federal law, the Earlham Community School District adopts the following policy to ensure school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day, prevent the overt identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition.

### **Payment of Meals**

Students have use of a meal account through Student Record Management Software. When an account balance reaches \$0 a student shall not be allowed to charge further a la carte items until the \$0 account balance is paid. Families may add money to a student accounts by making a payment of cash or check directly to the school office. Another option of payment is by setting up a direct pay through the family's bank, (bank bill pay system). School Nutrition fund should be noted on the memo portion of the check.

Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued negative balance from previous purchases. Students with outstanding meal charge debt shall be allowed to purchase a meal but no longer able to charge an extra purchase onto their meal account.

Employees may use a charge account for meals. When an account reaches \$-20 meal account balance, an employee shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid.

### **Negative Account Balances**

The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low. Notifications will begin when the family account balance goes below \$15. Additionally, the school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. The school district will coordinate communications with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the negative balance reaches \$-10. Families will be notified by automated emailing system or a phone call. Negative balances of more than \$-20 not paid prior to the end of the month, will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection.

### Communication of the Policy

The policy and supporting information regarding meal charges shall be provided in writing to:

- All households at or before the start of the school year;
- Students and families who transfer into the district, at time of transfer; and
- All staff responsible for enforcing any aspect of the policy.

Records of how and when the policy and supporting information was communicated to households and staff will be retained.

The superintendent may develop an administrative process to implement this policy.