

## Document Status: Draft Update

### Free and Reduced-Price Food Services

#### 4:130-E Exhibit - Free and Reduced-Price Food Services; Meal Charge Notifications

On District letterhead, website, in student handbook, newsletters, bulletins, and/or calendars

Date:

To: ~~Students~~, Parents/Guardians, ~~Students~~, and Staff

#### Re: Eligibility and Meal Charge Notifications

The following notification is provided at the beginning of each school year as federally required notification regarding eligibility requirements and the application process for the free and reduced-price food services that are listed in Board policy 4:130, *Free and Reduced-Price Food Services* and 4:140, *Waiver of Student Fees*. For more information, see [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges), and/or contact the Building Principal or designee.

#### Free and Reduced-Price Food Services Eligibility

When the parents/guardians of students are unable to pay for their child(ren)'s meal services, meal charges will apply per a student's eligibility category and will be processed by the District accordingly.

A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. ~~Department~~ Dept. of Agriculture, and distributed by the ~~Illinois~~ Ill. State Board of Education.

#### Meal Charges for Meals Provided by the District

The Building Principal and District staff will work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort to collect all funds due to the District will be made on a regular basis and before the end of the school year. Contact your Building Principal or designee about whether your child(ren)'s charges may be carried over at the end of the school year, i.e., beyond June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board policy 4:45, *Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery* and the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act (105 ILCS 123/, added by P.A. 100-1092). The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt.

When a student's funds are low or there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches. ~~PRESSPlus1~~ If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits, the Building Principal or designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable.

#### LEGAL REF.:

Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 ([P.L. 111-296](#)).

[7 C.F.R. §245.5](#).

[105 ILCS 123/](#), Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act. [23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 305](#), School Food Service.

~~DATED: May 10, 2017~~

Question 1. See Comment PRESSPlus1. Has the Board adopted a lower amount than five meals to trigger contact with a student's parent/guardian to collect owed monies? Type yes or no. If yes, type the number of meals adopted.

Answer:

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#### PRESSPlus Comments

PRESSPlus 1. The Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act allows school districts to determine a lower amount than five meals to trigger contact with a student's parent/guardian to collect owed monies. Before the board and the superintendent engage in a conversation about lowering this number, the superintendent may want to consider a conversation with his or her staff regarding the logistics of contacting a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) more than once per week (five lunches (the law states one free lunch or snack per day)) as setting a lower number may be impracticable for staff members to implement. See **Questions** to indicate whether a lower amount has been adopted.

**If a lower amount is adopted, and if the district's policy 4:45 includes language regarding the Local Debt Recovery Program that may become available through the Illinois Office of the Comptroller in the future, ensure that the number matches the number listed in policy 4:45, *Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery*.** If the Local Debt Recovery Program is included in policy 4:45, see the **Question** listed for 4:45 in **PRESS Plus** Issue 99. (If the Local Debt Recovery Program is not included in the district's policy 4:45, policy 4:45 is not included in Issue 99 for your district.)

**Issue 99, October/November 2018**