

## **MEAL CHARGING PROCEDURE**

The Tolland Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance of providing nutritious food to students in the Tolland Public Schools (the “District”). Good nutrition is essential to a student’s health and academic growth.

### **Charging Meals**

The District uses an automated prepayment system for student meal accounts. Students whose accounts have insufficient funds, and who do not bring a meal or other funds to school to pay for meals, may charge meals to their meal accounts. Students may not charge ala carte items, snacks or extra meals.

A parent/guardian may request that their student not be allowed to charge meals. This request must be made in writing to the Food Service Director and sent to Tolland BOE, 51 Tolland Green, Tolland CT 06084. In the event this request is made for a child it is fully expected that the student will have a nutritious meal from home each day.

The Board prohibits publicly identifying or shaming a student for any unpaid meal charges, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Delaying or refusing to serve a meal to such student;
- Designating a specific meal option for the student; or
- Otherwise taking any disciplinary action against the student.

All meal charges and outstanding balances are the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Parents/guardians are encouraged to pre-pay for their child(ren)’s meals through the district payment system My School Account or by sending funds to school.

In the event a student’s unpaid meal charges are equal to or more than the cost of thirty (30) meals, the parents/guardians of such student will be referred to the District’s homeless education liaison

### **Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges**

The District’s efforts to recover from households money owed due to the charging of meals must not have a negative impact on the children involved and shall focus primarily on the adults in the household responsible for providing funds for meal purchases. The District shall consider whether the benefits of potential collections outweigh the costs that would be incurred to achieve those collections.

For purposes of this procedure, “delinquent debt” means unpaid meal charges.

The District will contact the parents/guardians of students who charge meals to their meal accounts in order for the District to collect the delinquent debt. Communication will be via email letting parents/guardians know there is a negative balance. Subsequent written and verbal communications with parents/guardians concerning delinquent debt will be made by the department or building administrator or designee, as may be necessary and appropriate. All communications regarding unpaid meal charges shall be made directly and discreetly to parents/guardians. Written communications with parents/guardians regarding collection of a student’s unpaid meal charges shall include information on local food pantries and the Connecticut Department of Social Services’ supplemental nutrition assistance program, and a link to the District’s or Town’s website that lists any community services available to Town residents.

The Board shall comply with applicable federal and state laws and other federal or state requirements concerning the collection of unpaid meal charges. The Board may accept gifts, donations or grants from any public or private sources for the purpose of paying off any unpaid charges for school lunches, breakfasts or other such feeding.

Implementation date 1/10/2023