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| <u>Section E:</u> Business Management | Knox County Board of Education Policy | | |
| | Descriptor Term: School Nutrition Program Charges | Descriptor Code: E-191 | Issued: 7/16 |
| | | Reviewed: 4/19 | Revised: 6/19 |

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GENERAL

Ensuring that students are offered wholesome, nutritious and appealing meals helps ensure that students are ready to engage in the rigorous instruction and academic expectations of the Knox County Schools. The Knox County Schools operates a school nutrition program, managed under state and federal guidelines, that is designed to meet this need. Federal regulations require that this program operate financially independent from other school system activities. As such, the program has strict requirements to ensure that student meal accounts be made whole at the end of each fiscal year.

Students are encouraged to pre-pay for meals using the accounts made available to all students through the School Nutrition Program point of sale system. However, the Board of Education understands that students may from time to time lose meal money or find their account unexpectedly in arrears. Therefore, the School Nutrition Director will provide a system to allow students to charge meals. Charging meals is for emergencies only, and this courtesy is extended only to students. Students shall not charge a la carte (extra) items.

CHECKS RETURNED DUE TO NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS (NSF)

Each school cafeteria shall be enrolled in a check recovery program. All NSF checks will be forwarded by the bank to the provider of this service. The provider will make payment to the school cafeteria.

Once two NSF checks have been received from a parent or guardian, checks will no longer be accepted from the parent or guardian for the remainder of the school year.

APPLYING FOR FREE-REDUCED PRICE MEALS

Parents or guardians may apply for free or reduced price meals at any time during the school year. If a student's eligibility status changes to free or reduced price, any prior unpaid meal charges that have accrued are still owed.

PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DEBT

Each school cafeteria in conjunction with the school administration and food services supervisor shall communicate regularly with students' parents or guardians regarding any unpaid meal charges—

First step: The School Nutrition Director will notify the parent or guardian in writing of a student's unpaid account balance, and inquire as to whether the family would like to apply for free or reduced price meals.

Second step: If necessary, within two weeks, the cafeteria manager will contact the parent or guardian by telephone to follow up on the written correspondence

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Third step: If necessary, the school principal or the principal’s designee will contact the parent or guardian in writing or by telephone.

Last step: The debt shall be referred to a collection agent retained by the Knox County Schools for such purpose. The Director of Schools shall establish in procedure a reasonable threshold for the level of debt to be referred for collection.

To comply with federal and state regulations, unpaid meal charges and any other related monies owed to the School Nutrition Program must be paid from funds other than those of the School Nutrition Program. Any loss arising from unpaid meal charges or other bad debts (e.g. NSF checks and NSF check fees) are unallowable.

The Director of School Nutrition is responsible for compiling and reporting all unpaid meal charges and other bad debts to the Knox County Schools finance office for reimbursement from the General Purpose School Fund.

Legal Reference:
1. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual.*

Approved as to Legal Form
By Knox County Law Director 4/24/2019
/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director