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St. Francis Xavier Catholic School System Meal Charge Procedure

- **Purpose/Procedure:**

The purpose of this document is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the System. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Food Service Department. Food Services is a special revenue fund, which means it does not receive operating support from the System. Food Service must generate funds through meal sales, snack sales, and Federal and State reimbursement to pay operating expenses. These expenses include food costs, supplies and staff wages, including healthcare benefits. Therefore, unpaid charges affect the ability of the Food Service to support itself, its employees and ultimately our student body.

- **The goals of this policy are:**

- To establish a consistent System policy regarding charges and collection of charges.
- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive situations with System staff, System business policies, students, and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish policies that are age appropriate.
- To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

- **Scope of Responsibility:**

The Finance Department/Food Service Company: The Finance Department is responsible for lunch account deposit records and notifying the school principals of outstanding balances. The Finance Department maintains the responsibility for collections of delinquent account balances and is also responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian of low or negative account balances. The Food Service Company is responsible for maintaining charge records for meals.

The Parent/Guardian: It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure their children's account balance is positive. Immediate payment is required if the account is in deficit.

- **Administration:**

- **Students with Free and Reduced Meal Price Status**

- **Free lunch** status allows a child to receive a full meal every day. A la carte items are not part of the USDA Free/Reduced Meal Program. A free lunch must consist of meat/meat alternatives (Chicken patty, meatballs, string cheese, yogurt, etc), grain (hamburger bun, pizza crust, dinner roll, etc), at least one fruit and/or vegetable, and milk. Students have access to unlimited fruits and vegetables. To receive the full meal price, you will need to have at least three out of the five components listed above with one of those being either a fruit or a vegetable.

- **Reduced lunch** status allows a child to receive reduced priced meals at an amount determined by the USDA and DPI. The current reduced meal price is \$0.40. Every effort must be made to keep the account balance positive. A la carte items are not part of the USDA Free/Reduced Meal Program.

If a student's selection does meet the requirements for a "free meal" they will not be eligible for the Free/Reduced meal and will be charged as an A la carte.

- **Students with Full Pay Status**

- Elementary, Middle and High School Students will be allowed to charge up to a negative \$10.00, which will be known as the "account cap". No student will be allowed to charge any a la carte item when their account does not have a positive balance.
 - All Food Service Accounts are pre-paid and must maintain a positive balance.
 - Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent via Sunday emails to parent/guardian throughout the year.
 - When the child reaches the "account cap", an email will be generated and sent to the child's home immediately including a copy of this policy and an application for Free/Reduced Meals.
 - If the account is not brought into good standing within 7 days, a call will be made to the child's home asking for the child's School Food Service Account to be immediately brought into good standing.
 - If after the additional 7 days the account is still not brought into good standing, the negative balance may be transferred to the Family Blackbaud Tuition Management account and will be subject to all late fees and penalties charged by Blackbaud Tuition Management. After a transfer is made to Blackbaud, a deposit to the student's Food Service Account will need to be made before the student may resume using the Food Service Program.

- **Year End Balances Owed:** Collection of Balance Owed will adhere to the following policies and will apply to any account balance below zero at any time after the last day of the current school year, and any payments made by check that are returned by the bank with notice of "insufficient funds". Balances may be checked at any time by accessing PowerSchool. All accounts must be settled by the last day of the current school year.

- **Balances Owed with No Response by Parent/Guardian:** If payment is not received within the two 7-day grace periods to bring the Pre-Pay Food Service Account into good standing, the negative balance will be transferred to the Family Blackbaud Tuition Management account and will be subject to all late fees and penalties charged by Blackbaud Tuition Management.

- Failure to reply to notices and pay balances owed, students will be placed on financial hold. This will affect your student's ability to participate in extracurricular activities, field trips, or graduation ceremonies.
- **Refunds:** If a student withdraws or graduates, their lunch balance will be transferred automatically to a sibling's account by June 30th of the current school year. If no sibling remains in the System, a refund will be automatically generated by June 30th.