



# RUTLAND NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

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NO: J1718003P

TO: All Administrators of RNESU

FROM: Jeanne Collins, Superintendent

DATE: July 27, 2017

RE: RNESU Food Service Collaborative – Meal Charge Procedure for All Schools in Otter Valley UUSD and Barstow Memorial School

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish consistent procedures for the schools of Otter Valley UUSD including Leicester Central School, Lothrop Elementary School, Neshobe Elementary School, Otter Valley UHS, Whiting Sudbury Learning Academy and Barstow Memorial School, herein after RNESU Schools to provide meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

## GENERAL STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE

- A. The RNESU Schools recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program.
- B. It is the procedure of RNESU Schools to offer high quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry.
- C. Payments to student accounts are made by families with a check to the school, with cash in person, or online through Meals Plus.
- D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to households with students on the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the applications as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school office during regular business hours and online at [www.rnesu.org](http://www.rnesu.org). If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits any time during the school year.
  1. Households who apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced price meal without an approved application or direct certification information on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with the approving

official: Susan Solari at [ssolari@rnesu.org](mailto:ssolari@rnesu.org) or 802-247- 3721 to see if the application has been received.

2. Households who are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits will receive a notification of eligibility letter based on Direct Certification from the school if the school has received information about your child(ren). If your household receives these benefits and you have not received this letter from the school, the school has not received information regarding eligibility of your child(ren), the household must contact the school immediately to provide current information.
3. Free and reduced-price eligible students may receive a breakfast and a lunch each day at no charge.
4. A la carte items, such as a separate carton of milk or a second entrée, are not allowed to be charged.

#### **MEAL CHARGE PROCEDURE**

- A. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals,
  - Students will be allowed to charge 3 lunch and 3 breakfast meals up to a maximum of \$15.00.
  - All negative balances must be paid prior to the end of the school year. Any remaining balances will be carried over to the next school year.
- B. Free and reduced-price eligible students will always be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts.
- C. A student eligible for paid meals who has 'cash in hand' at the time of meal service will be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts. The 'cash in hand' will not be applied to past due accounts.
- D. Students with an overdrawn account are not allowed to charge a la carte items.

#### **ACCOUNT STATUS NOTIFICATIONS**

Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in the student accounts to cover weekly meal purchases. The RNESU Schools will notify each household of account balances by

- The Food Service Program will send a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly email or notice to families.
- Families can check their account balances online via Meals Plus.

*Note, Students will NOT be given a verbal reminder or written notice in the food service line to maintain confidentiality.*

The family will be notified when the student account balance has reached \$15.00 or less followed by an email reminder once the student account reaches \$0. Weekly emails will be sent to parents whose children have a negative account balance. A second request for payment will be sent after 5 days if the household has not responded to the first request. Then a letter is sent to parents via the U.S. Mail requesting payment.

### **COLLECTION OF UNPAID MEAL DEBT**

When the student balance is \$0.00 or less, the following collection activities will be followed for all RNEU schools:

- The Food Service Manager/Director will contact the building principal if no payment is received.
- The building principal will contact the household to discuss the requirement of the family to provide meals for the student, offer/remind families about the ability to apply for benefits if applicable.
- All funds owed to the food service program will be paid in full on the last day of school.