

A POLICY STATEMENT  
OF  
THE HANCOCK COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
New Cumberland, West Virginia 26047

CENTRALIZED FOOD SERVICE BILLING

~~This policy will become effective at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year.~~

This policy is implemented to ensure a school environment that protects the rights and privacy of children...that treats all children the same regardless of who pays for the meal...and that promotes optimal nutrition for all students.

Hancock County Schools ~~provide~~ makes available breakfast and lunch to all children daily. The Food Service Department will operate a countywide billing system whereby students at all grade levels may charge their meals daily. The bills will be calculated and mailed monthly ~~directly to the parent/guardian. from the Food Service Department.~~

The Hancock County Food Service Department ~~facilities are operated~~ operates in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin.

RESPONSIBILITY

All schools will operate on a charge program.

**The secretary's responsibilities** ~~will be to input basic~~ include providing student information into the computer ~~base and to downloading the information~~ base ~~it~~ for the POS centralized billing process. Also, the secretary is ~~will be~~ responsible for providing ~~any~~ information to the cooks for the end of the month report.

**The Cook's responsibilities** ~~will be~~ include the end of the month report and ~~to~~ downloading the centralized billing data to diskette and sending the information to the centralized Food Service Office. The Cooks ~~will~~ also collect for adult lunches, 2<sup>nd</sup> lunches purchased by students, extra milk or water.

**The Food Service Office** ~~will~~ prints bills and mails the bills to the parents. A return envelope will accompany the bill. Checks will be mailed directly to the Food Service Department from the parent. **"Parent/Guardians are given the option to pay their bills by credit or debit card. The link is located on the County website."**

**Food Service Staff** ~~will~~ credit student accounts, prepare deposits daily, and pursue past due accounts in a timely manner.

Adults will not be allowed to charge on the centralized billing system. Also, students who purchase second lunches, milk or water will not be allowed to charge. ~~The cooks will collect for these~~ The money will be collected for these purchases as they are made.

**BILLING PROCEDURES**

1. Bills will be calculated and mailed by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, beginning in October of each school year.
2. Bills must be for at least \$2.00 before they will be mailed to parents.
3. All bills will be considered past due if not paid in full by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month following the billing.
4. A second bill will be mailed when the bill becomes past due.
5. A demand letter will be sent to the parents when the bill is 30 days old.
6. Unpaid accounts will be considered delinquent after 45 days.
7. All delinquent accounts will automatically lose the privilege of charging. Parents will be notified by mail that charging privileges have been suspended. The letter will include a list of alternatives for the lunch. Parents must send cash daily, pay the bill in full, or send a bag lunch. Sending a child to school without money for a meal or a bag lunch may be interpreted as child neglect by the authorities.
8. The Food Service Department must notify school/principal of responsibilities and liabilities when a child's account becomes delinquent. School/Principal must stop charge privileges. Further debt incurred by the child after the notice will automatically become the responsibility of the school/principal.
9. The collection of delinquent accounts may be pursued through a collection agency ~~or Magistrate Court.~~

10

The Hancock County Food Service Department has the authority to track and collect all debts as long as the child is a student of the Hancock County School System; however, circumstances may arise which would justify termination of the debt.

All costs associated with the collection of an account will become the responsibility of the debtor.

**BAD CHECK NONSUFFICIENT FUND PROCEDURE:**

A Check returned to the Food Service Department for nonsufficient funds “**will be handled by the Board’s designee and is subject to a \$25 returned check service charge fee.**”

1. The individual will be notified by telephone and asked to redeem the check and pay all bank fees that have incurred.
2. A certified notice will be mailed to the individual if the check is not picked up within ten days requesting full payment of check plus appropriate service charges.
3. If no response is made within ten days, the nonsufficient ~~bad~~-check will be sent to a collection agency.

**YEAR END ACCOUNT BALANCE:**

1. A credit balance will be carried over to the following school year unless a parent/guardian requests the money before June 15 of each school year.
2. An uncollected account debt will carryover to the following year and be pursued following the collection procedures outlined in this policy.

### **UNCOLLECTIBLE DEBTS DUE FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM**

A debt is determined uncollectible when the Food Service Program can not recover the debt through enforced collection and there is not realistic expectation for a future collection. A diligent effort using the collection policy will be undertaken before the determination that the debt is uncollectible. When the Food Service Program determines that a debt is uncollectible, it will terminate active collection and write-off the debt when one or more of the following criteria apply:

1. The debt can not be substantiated. Food Service Program does not have or can not produce the evidence or witnesses necessary to validate a claim and has not been able to obtain the voluntary repayment of the debt.
2. The costs of pursuing collections are unreasonable. The Food Service Program should not recover a debt when collection exceeds the amount of the debt unless a significant enforcement principle was at stake, such as fraud. The Food Service Program should always consider the cost associated with the collection strategy before deciding on further collection action.
3. The debtor can not be located. The Food Service Program is unable to locate the debtor after exercising all reasonable attempts to do so.
4. The Statute of Limitations has expired. The chances of recovering the debt does not justify retaining the debt as a receivable because the Statue of Limitations has expired.

DATE ADOPTED: July 8, 2002

*The above Policy Statement is an integral part of the Official Policy Manual of this Board of Education as of the date shown adopted.*