

## Negative Balance and NSF Procedure

### **Negative Balance Process:**

The mission of the Northfield Public Schools Child Nutrition Department is to provide quality, nutritious meals that support the growth and development of our students to fuel their learning. It is our goal to provide your child a healthy, well-balanced lunch and breakfast meal. Our district participates in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program so that students can have one breakfast and one lunch at no cost at school. This program is detailed in Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.111, subdivision 1(c). While these two meals are reimbursable, all second meals, a la carte items, and early childhood program meals are considered non-reimbursable. The Minnesota Free School Meals Program pertains only to reimbursable meals. Parents or guardians are responsible for monitoring their student's meal account balances. If we see that a child's account balance is running low we make every reasonable effort to notify families of the need for a meal account payment using the following process:

**Initial parent contact:** We utilize the Skylert messenger system to contact families about both low and negative account balances, depending on selected notification preferences. The family will begin receiving automated phone messages twice per week stating low balance reminders when an account falls below \$10.00.

**Second communication:** If the student meal account maintains a negative balance for more than one week a statement may be sent home with the student by the kitchen staff at the student's school.

**Third communication:** Family will be contacted by phone or e-mail if a student account falls below negative \$10.00 by the Child Nutrition Department. If payment is not received in 14 days, the Northfield Schools Finance Department will send an invoice to be paid within 14 days from the invoice date.

**Negative Staff Balances:** Staff with a negative balance of more than \$5.00 will not be able to purchase a meal and will be contacted by e-mail. If payment is not received in 14 days, the Northfield Schools Finance Department will send an invoice to be paid within 14 days from the invoice date.

**Final district communication:** If the student account invoice has not received payment within the 14 day period, the account may be turned over to an outside collection agency.

The Child Nutrition Department is willing to work with you to set up a payment plan if you have concerns regarding payment on your account. Questions or concerns should be directed to Rachel Brownlee at (507) 663-0621 or [rbrownlee@northfieldschools.org](mailto:rbrownlee@northfieldschools.org)

### **NSF Process:**

Northfield Public Schools uses Advantage Collection Professionals as our third party collection agency. If a check is returned as NSF it is automatically routed to ACP, Inc. ACP, Inc. will attempt to collect the funds plus a fee of \$30.00.

Upon notification of NSF from ACP, Inc. Northfield Public Schools will deduct the payment from the student's lunch account.

Upon collection of the NSF Northfield Public Schools will credit the students account balance.

Questions regarding this process can be directed to Accounts Receivable at 507-645-3440.