

Adopted: December 13, 2019
Reviewed: _____

UBAH MEDICAL ACADEMY

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES (534)

Note: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Policy Memorandum SP 46-2016 requires all School Food Authorities (i.e., school districts) operating federal school meal programs to have a written and clearly communicated system to address unpaid meal charges by July 1, 2017. USDA Policy Memorandum SP 23-2017 clarified that school districts could adopt a “policy” or “standard practice.” Although this document is styled as a “policy,” school districts may establish and implement a set of written procedures instead of a policy, provided that the written document explains how the school district will handle situations where students eligible to receive reduced-price or paid meals do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of their meals at the time of service. The policy or standard practice must be implemented throughout the school district.

Note: This MSBA/MASA model policy is drafted to be consistent for all grade levels. However, local school districts may vary the meal charge policy for elementary, middle, and high schools.

Note: School districts must follow appropriate debt collection practices when attempting to recover unpaid meal charges.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the school district’s nutrition program and that school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day and minimize identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

II. PAYMENT OF MEALS

A. The school district receives school lunch aid under Minn. Stat. § 124D.111. Therefore, school lunches are available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.

III. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION

A. Students do not acquire low or negative account balances because all meals are financially accounted for by the school.

IV. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

A. Students do not acquire unpaid meal charges because all meals are financially accounted for by the school.

V. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy and any pertinent supporting information shall be provided in writing (i.e., mail, email, back-to-school packet, student handbook, etc.) to:
1. all households at or before the start of each school year;
 2. students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment; and
 3. all school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.
- B. The school district may post the policy on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124D.111, Subd. 4
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act)
7 C.F.R. § 210 *et seq.* (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)
USDA Policy Memorandum SP 46-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policies (2016)
USDA Policy Memorandum SP 47-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Clarification on Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments (2016)
USDA Policy Memorandum SP 23-2017, Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&A
Minn. Op. Atty. Gen. 169j (May 14, 2019) (*Letter to Ricker*)

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