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**COLOGNE ACADEMY  
MANUAL OF SCHOOL POLICIES APPROVED BY THE BOARD**

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**POLICY 340: COLOGNE ACADEMY FOOD SERVICE**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the school's nutrition program and that school employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The policy of the school is to provide meals to students in a respectful manner and to maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming or otherwise ostracizing the student. 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 a la carte items or second meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program. Cologne Academy participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals program as outlined in Minn. Statute 124D.111 Subdivision 1.

**MEAL SERVICE**

Cologne Academy participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals Program, and therefore all enrolled students will receive one breakfast and one lunch at no charge while at school regardless of an outstanding meal balance. All reimbursable meals offered meet state and federal guidelines. Providing an alternate meal not on the scheduled menu violates Minnesota law (Minn. Statute 124D.111, subdivision 5), except where a special diet is prescribed by an authorized medical professional for a specific student.

**Point of Service**

In order for Cologne Academy to receive State and Federal reimbursement for meals served, each student must be identified at the point of service. Each child is given a PIN code to identify them in their family account. All students will be treated respectfully and in accordance with Minn. Statute 124D.111, Subdivision 5.

## **NON PROGRAM FOOD SALES**

Nonprogram Food Sales are any food or beverage not included in the reimbursable meal. Cologne Academy does provide an opportunity for all students to purchase milk and middle school students to purchase second meals in addition to the meals at no cost, but only if the student has sufficient funds. Funds can be added to the family account

## **SPECIAL DIETS**

If your child has special dietary concerns the school is required to provide substitutions if:

- Student provides documentation of the requirements above in a signed medical statement from a licensed physician. Statement must also identify the foods to be omitted and the substitutions to be made.

The School will recognize special dietary concerns and may make substitutions at the School Food Authorities discretion if:

- Student provides documentation of the special dietary condition in a signed medical statement from a recognized medical authority. Statement must also identify the foods to be omitted and the substitutions to be made.

If your child is lactose intolerant the School Food Authorities must have a written request from a parent in order for the school to provide lactose reduced milk or milk fortified with lactose or milk with lactobacillus acidophilus. This does not include juice as an alternative.

## **MEAL CHARGE**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures for Cologne Academy.

### **II. GENERAL STATE OF POLICY**

- A. Students have use of a meal account. When an account balance falls below \$0.00 a student shall not be allowed to charge second meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid.
- B. Parents can send payment (check or cash) with their child to school to be dropped off in the main office or payment can be made via [Edutrack](#). Edutrack is the school's electronic payment system that allows a parent to automatically pay for school fees (e.g. lunch, field trips and participation fees).
- C. Each school that participates in the free school meals program must:
  - (1) participate in the United States Department of Agriculture School Breakfast Program and the United States Department of Agriculture National School Lunch

Program; and

(2) provide to all students at no cost up to two federally reimbursable meals per school day, with a maximum of one free breakfast and one free lunch.

D. Once a meal has been placed on a student's tray or otherwise served to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.

E. When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge a la carte.

III. F. If a parent or guardian chooses to send in one payment that is to be divided between sibling accounts, the parent or guardian must specify how the funds are to be distributed to the students' accounts. Funds may not be transferred between sibling accounts unless verbal or written permission is received from the parent or guardian.

A. Students have use of a family meal account. When the balance reaches zero, a student may not charge an additional item until funds are added to account. Families may add money to students' accounts by electronic payment or pay at the school office.

#### IV. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION

A. The school participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program; all enrolled students will receive breakfast and lunch at no charge due to state funding.

B. It is the school's procedure to offer breakfast and/or lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines.

C. The school will maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming or ostracizing students with unpaid or negative account balances.

D. The school will not withdraw a meal from a student once the meal has been placed on a tray or has otherwise been served regardless of outstanding meals balance.

E. Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid food service accounts.

F. Alternate meals may not be provided to students as a result of school lunch debt. Providing an alternate meal not on the school menu violates Minnesota law (Minn. Stat. 124D.111 subd. 5).

G. The school does not use a collection agency to collect unpaid school meals debt.

H. The school may not enlist assistance of non-school employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.

I. The school will not impose any other restrictions prohibited under Minn. Stat.

123B.37 due to unpaid student meal balances. The school will not limit a student's participation in any school activities, graduation ceremonies, field trips, athletics, activity clubs, or extracurricular activities or access to materials, technology, or other items provided to students due to an unpaid student meal balance.

J. It is the expectation of the school that all unpaid balances incurred by a student will be paid in full by the parent/guardian by the end of the school year..

## V. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

A. The school district will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price meals for their children.

B. The school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. Unpaid meal charges are designated as delinquent debt when payment is overdue, the debt is considered collectable, and efforts are being made to collect it.

C. The school district may not enlist the assistance of non-school district employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.

D. The school district will not impose any other restriction prohibited under Minnesota Statutes section 123B.37 due to unpaid student meal balances. The school district will not limit a student's participation in any school activities, graduation ceremonies, field trips, athletics, activity clubs, or other extracurricular activities or access to materials, technology, or other items provided to students due to an unpaid student meal balance. All students determined eligible for free and reduced price lunch are served a reimbursable meal even if there is outstanding debt.

E. Once an unpaid meal account is determined to be uncollectible, Cologne Academy does not use a collections agency to collect the funds.

## REIMBURSABLE MEALS

### I. PURPOSE

To assure that students, parents and staff are informed of the Offer versus Serve provision and that it is implemented correctly.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. It is the responsibility of the building principal, teachers, office staff and food service staff to assure that students are encouraged to make healthy food choices and that established procedures are followed.

B. Cologne Academy Public Schools extends Offer versus Serve to all grade levels.

- C. The building Principal and Food Service Supervisor assure that annual training about Offer versus Serve is provided to students, parents and staff.
- D. The Food Service Supervisor is responsible for assuring that responsible staff is trained to identify reimbursable meals and the appropriate action to take if a student does not select a reimbursable meal.

### III. SERVING REIMBURSABLE MEALS

- A. The food service staff/teachers/assistant encourages students to make healthy food choices.
- B. The cafeteria lunch line monitor identifies the student, determines if the student has selected a reimbursable meal and verifies the student has entered their correct PIN.
- C. If the student has not selected a reimbursable meal, the cafeteria lunch line monitor asks the student to return to the serving line and select additional food items.
- D. Once a participant has placed a meal on a tray or otherwise served the meal to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.

It is the policy of Cologne Academy that all programs, activities, courses of study, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

### 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
3. All school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.

B. Cologne Academy will post this policy on the school district's website in addition to providing the required written notification described above. Cologne Academy will ensure that any

third-party provider with whom the school district enters into either an original or modified contract after July 1, 2021, adheres to the school district's school meals policy.

### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of

race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

Cologne Academy is an equal opportunity provider.