

Procedure for Student Lunch/M Meal Accounts

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent district practices for the provision of meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires school food authorities to establish written administrative guidelines and procedures for meal charges.

- Morgan Local Schools' goals is to provide nutritious meals to students to promote healthy eating habits and enhance learning as well as maintain the financial integrity of the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and eliminate stigmatization of children who are unable to pay meal charges.
- It is the policy of Morgan Local Schools to offer breakfast and lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines.
- Families may apply for free/reduced-price meal benefits anytime during the school year. The Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application is distributed to all families in the district prior to the student's first day of school. In addition, the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application is available at your student's school office. If household income or size changes, families can apply for meal benefits anytime during the school year.
- Morgan Local Schools will maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming or otherwise ostracizing the student.

Morgan Local Schools will adhere to the following meal charge procedure.

- All cafeteria purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins or purchased at the time of transaction. Cash and check can be brought into school and deposited into the student's account. Funds can be uploaded online through the PaySchools portal.
- A student with a negative balance and no cash on hand may not charge or purchase "a la carte" items.
- Schools will not deny a meal to a student who pays reduced or full price and who does not provide the required payment for that meal, but it will be charged to the student's account.
- Once staff or the student have placed a meal on a tray or otherwise served the meal to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.
- The food service manager or other school personnel will coordinate communications with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to resolve the matter of unpaid charges.
- If food services staff suspects that a student may be abusing this policy, written notice will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) if he/she continues to abuse this policy.
- The food service manager will also send home letters every two weeks to parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who carry negative balances of \$50 and above. Also, the food service manager will send letters at every report card time to any student with a negative balance.
- All accounts must be settled at the end of the school year. Letters will be sent home as stated above to students who have any negative balances. Negative balances not paid in full prior to the end of the school year will force the corporation to take action to collect unpaid funds by means of collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method deemed necessary by the corporation.

- Students who graduate or withdraw from the corporation and have \$5 or more left in their lunch/meal food service account will be notified by mail by food services at the time of the closing of the account and given the option to transfer the funds to another student or to receive a refund. Students who graduate or withdraw from the corporation and have less than \$5 will not receive a direct notification by mail, but the household can contact the central office to receive a refund. If no response is received within 10 days the student's lunch/meal account will close and the funds will no longer be available.

COLLECTION AND FORGIVENESS OF DEBT

The Board understands it is required to collect all monies owed to it by patrons, employees, parents, and students, including money owed through student lunch accounts and other extracurricular accounts. Every effort should be made by the school administration to collect the monies owed to the school corporation, including collection procedures. Such efforts must be documented by school administration before the debt is forgiven, waived, or written off the school corporation accounts and considered an uncollectable account.

Any reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any child participating in the school lunch program, including but not limited to dumping meals, withdrawing a meal that has been served, announcing, or listing students' names publicly, or affixing stickers, stamps, or pins.

The school corporation may forgive, waive, or write-off all or a portion of the debt if one of the following conditions is met:

1. The school administration determines that the student or the parent or guardian of the student is unable to pay the debt;
2. The payment of the debt could impact the health or safety of the student;
3. The cost to pursue and collect the debt from the student and his/her parents would cost more than the potential total debt collected; or
4. There are mitigating circumstances as determined by the superintendent that preclude the collection of the debt.

Every decision to forgive, waive, or write-off a debt must be documented and include the specific facts for the decision relating to one of the above stated reasons. If the uncollectable debt is a student lunch account, it cannot be an expense to the school food service account and must be covered by non-Federal funds.

The superintendent may develop regulations addressing specific situations relating to the above conditions.

In the cases where a positive balance exists in the accounts, every effort must be made by the school administration to return the positive balance to the account holder when the person is no longer in the school corporation. If attempts made to refund the balance have been unsuccessful, the balance should be transferred to the corresponding school fund or if such transfer is not appropriate, to the school corporation general fund.

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/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.