



FARMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 192	<i>MSBA Policy 534</i> <i>Orig. 2017</i>
POLICIES AND REGULATIONS	<i>Revised: 07-2023</i> <i>Adopted: 08-2021</i>

## **STUDENTS**

### **534 SCHOOL MEALS POLICY**

#### **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 of the school district 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/entrees as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

#### **II. PAYMENT OF MEALS**

- A. All a la carte items or second meal/entrees purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins.
1. Payments may be made via e-funds. Instructions for how to do this are located on the Chartwells Food Service website – <https://payments.efundsforschools.com/v3/districts/55024>.
  2. Check or money orders made out to Chartwells Food Service and delivered in person or mailed to 510 Walnut Street, Farmington, MN 55024.
  3. Students may provide a check to the lunchroom cashier at school using their ID or PIN.
  4. Payment plans can also be set up directly at the Chartwells Food Service office located at the address above or via phone at 651-460-3820.

A student who does not have sufficient funds will not be allowed to charge meals or a la carte items until additional money is deposited in the student's account.

If the school district participates in the United States Department of Agriculture National School Lunch program and has an Identified Student Percentage below the federal percentage determined for all meals to be reimbursed at the free rate via the Community Eligibility Provision must participate in the free school meals program.

- B. A school that participates in the United States Department of Agriculture National School Lunch program and has an Identified Student Percentage at or above the federal percentage determined for all meals to be reimbursed at the free rate must participate in the Federal Community Eligibility Provision in order to participate in the free school meal program.
- 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
  - 1. 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. The school district may provide an alternate meal that meets federal and state requirements to a student who does not have sufficient funds in the student's account or cannot pay cash for a meal. The school district will accommodate special dietary needs with respect to alternate meals. The cost of the alternative meal (price is dependent upon which level – elementary, middle school or high school) will be charged to the student's account or otherwise charged to the student.
- E. When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge a snack item.

### **III. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES - NOTIFICATION**

- A. The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero.
- B. Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the negative balance reaches \$20.00. Account balance information is available through the district's telephone or internet systems on the <https://family.wordwareinc.com>. To set up an online account, you will need to contact Food Service to get a Family Key. Both systems provide this confidential information in a timely and secure manner. Families can also sign up with food service to receive a low balance notification by e-mail. The food service office may also be contacted to provide account data. In addition, children are advised of low balances by cashiers when they purchase food.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program. A meal will not be taken away from a student with an overdrawn account.

### **IV. 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-priced 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. Negative balances of more than \$20.00, not paid after the third attempt to connect with the family will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Collection options may include, but are not limited to, use of collection agencies, claims in the conciliation court, or any other legal method permitted by law.
- D. The school district may not enlist the assistance of non-school district employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.
- E. 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, other items provided to students due to an unpaid student meal balance.

## 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. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)  
Minn. Stat. § 124D.111(School Meals Policies; Lunch Aid; Food Service Accounting)  
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