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PAS Policy 534
Orig. 2017
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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 school meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. It is the policy of ISD #2689 to offer breakfast and provide lunch at school. The Food Service Department strives to produce quality meals in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.
- B. ISD #2689 (Pipestone Area Schools) recognizes the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide breakfast and lunch for their children. Proper nutritional intake is essential for adequate learning to occur.
- C. The Food Service Department utilizes a computerized Point of Sale system requiring pre-payments. Students may purchase meals when funds have been deposited into their personal account. Cash payments are always accepted and students selecting ala-carte options can use either cash or positive lunch account funds at the Middle School/High School.
- D. Account balances must be positive. The lunch account works similar to a checking account. When a meal or item is purchased, the amount is deducted from the family lunch account. School lunch account information may be accessed online.
- E. Families may apply for free/reduced meals anytime during the school year. Applications are provided to all families in the district prior to the school year. In addition, applications are available at the district office and online at the district website:
<http://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/index.php?sid=1408151709172457&page=lunchapps>

- F. School Food Service procedures and guidelines will provide supplemental procedural information to Policy 534.

III. PAYMENT OF MEALS

- A. The Food Service Program is a pre-payment program. Families are expected to have a positive balance in their students account at the beginning of the year and during the course of the school year.
- B. If the school district receives school lunch aid under Minnesota Statutes section 124D.111, it must make lunch available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
- C. A student who has been determined to be eligible for free and reduced-price lunch always must be served a reimbursable meal even if the student has an outstanding debt.
- 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. The parent/guardian will be notified when their students account reaches a balance of \$10.00 or less.
- F. The parent/guardian will receive a 2nd notification from the Food Service Director when their students account reaches a zero or negative balance.
- G. When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge an ala carte item.
- H. Ala carte items may be purchased cash-in-line for negative account-balance families.
- I. A negative balance of \$10.00 initiates notification to the school principal, who will communicate to appropriate staff to contact parent/guardian.
- J. When a student account reaches negative (-) \$25.00, a mandatory meeting with school personnel will be held to complete appropriate paperwork or arrangements to balance lunch accounts.
- K. Assistance from county social services or law enforcement may be requested by the school when above procedures are unsuccessful.
- L. Families who have been notified of negative balances and who have not made payment arrangements or paid in full by the end of the school year will be turned over to collection agencies designated by the district, or will be taken to small claims court.

IV. STAFF MEALS

- A. Staff meals may be purchased at a price determined by the Food Service Department. There shall be no complimentary staff meals. Portions for individual items may not exceed those given to high school aged students.
- B. Staff showing a negative balance of \$25.00 or more in their account will have their account closed until payment is made in full.

V. SECOND MEALS

- A. A second meal that has three to five food groups may be purchased at a price determined by the Food Service Department.

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 will post this policy on the school district's website, or the website of the organization where the meal is served, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.
- C. If the school district contracts with a third party for its meal services, it will provide the vendor with its school meals policy. The school district 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.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.111 (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