

Unpaid Meal Policy

Reading Edge Academy Inc.

(11.5)

Unpaid Meal Policy

This policy presents the approved procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meal benefits have insufficient funds to pay for School meals; as well as for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt. This policy details how students will be charged for meals, as well as offering alternate meals, limits on meal charges, or allowing neither meal charges nor alternate meals when a student's account has insufficient funds.

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of school nutrition programs.

- Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
- Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service are provided a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day's meal, the School will not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.
- Students without funds to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal are not allowed to charge any meal
- Students are allowed to charge 3 days of meals, both breakfast and lunch or the dollar equivalent to the days of breakfast and lunch.
- Students who charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal/alternate breakfast or lunch.
- Alternative breakfast and meal options will be available, and they will comply with the requirements of the NSLP and USDA meal pattern requirements.

(11.5.1)

Communicating the Policy

- The written meal charge policy will be available on the School's website, included in the student information packet distributed on the first day of school and to all transfer students during the school year, and attached to

the Meal Benefits Application.

- The written meal charge policy will be communicated to all cafeteria staff prior to the first day of school.
- Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on meal charge policy and record of training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
- Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

(11.5.2)

Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance In Student Cafeteria Account

- The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account falls below \$15.00 OR the equivalent of three day's meals, breakfast, and lunch.
- The School will notify households of low or negative balances. Letters via US mail, email, or a notification letter will be sent home by the student in a white envelope and addressed to the parent or legal guardian.
- Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.
- The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
 - The Cafeteria Manager
 - The Cafeteria Assistant Manager

Bad debt is defined as delinquent debt that is deemed uncollectible at the end of the school year. Students with a bad debt account will not be carried over to the next school year. However, available non-federal fund sources will be engaged to offset the debts.

At the end of the school year, the Finance Manager will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. Bad debt will be restored to the School from the general fund prior to the end of the same fiscal year.

Efforts to collect delinquent and/or bad debt will be handled by the following

- Send First and Second Letters
- Phone calls

- Consequence - Parent Contract will be revoked and the student will not be invited to return to the school.