

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE or STANDARD PRACTICE

534AP

Unpaid Meal Charges

Orig.: August 7, 2017

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this administrative procedure 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.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

- A. It is the goal of Robbinsdale Area Schools to provide nutritious meals to students to promote healthy eating habits and enhance learning as well as maintain the financial integrity of the National School Breakfast and Lunch program and eliminate stigmatization of children who are unable to pay meal charges.
- B. It is the administrative procedure of Robbinsdale Area Schools to offer breakfast and lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines.
- C. Student meal accounts are a prepaid system.
- D. Families may apply for free/reduced-price meal benefits anytime during the school year. Notification to all families will be mailed prior to the start of each school year and households may apply online. Applications are available at each school and the Education Service Center. If household income or size change, families can apply for meal benefits anytime during the school year.

III. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES

- A. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals, the student will be allowed to charge their meal. Parents/guardians are responsible for payment of all charged meals.
- B. Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid meal balance.
- C. When a student eligible for paid meals presents cash to pay for a meal, the student will be served a meal regardless of unpaid meal balance. The cash presented will not be applied towards unpaid balances.

IV. NOTIFICATION AND COLLECTION OF UNPAID BALANCES

- A. Parents/guardians are able to check their student's meal account balance on the Parent Portal or via PayPams.com.
- B. Parents/guardians will be notified weekly, via voice mail and email, when their student has an unpaid balance.
- C. Parents/guardians will be notified quarterly, via mail, of unpaid meal balances (\$50.00) or greater. Letters will request payment of unpaid balances or to contact the Child Nutrition office to arrange a payment plan.
- D. Unpaid balance letters will be included in student conference folders.
- E. Parents/guardians will be notified of unpaid meal balances by the school bookkeeper when a student registers for activities. Parents/guardians are required to contact the Child Nutrition Department to bring the account up to date.
- F. Child Nutrition Department will encourage parents to complete the free/reduced-price meal application.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124d.111, Subd. 4
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act)
Minn. Rules Parts 1205.0100-1205.2000 (Data Practices)
7 C.F.R. §210 *et seq.* (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R. §220.8 *et seq.* (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

Cross References: Wellness Policy 533