



Happy Valley School
7140 W. Happy Valley School
Peoria, AZ 85383

Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

Federal Requirement:

The purpose of this policy is to address the need for school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to institute and clearly communicate a meal charge policy, which would include, if applicable, the availability of alternate meals. Because all students in participating schools may receive reimbursable school meals, all SFAs must have a policy in place for children who are participating at the reduced price or paid rate, but either do not have money to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. Such a policy ensures that school food service professionals, school administrators, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations in these situations.

This requirement is referred to as a “policy”, but whether this is referred to as a “policy” or “standard practice” is at the discretion of the SFA. Regardless of terminology used, the policy or standard practice must consist of a written document explaining how the SFA will handle situations where children eligible to receive reduced price or paid meals do not have the money to cover the cost of their meal at the time of service. The policy or standard practice must be implemented throughout the SFA.

Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the school. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of this standard of practice are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts
- To support positive situations with staff, business policies, student and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible
- To establish policies that are age appropriate
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student
- To establish a consistent policy regarding charges and collection of charges

Scope of Responsibility:

- The food service department, Office Manager: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the student’s parent/guardian.
- The Parent/Guardian: Immediate payment

Administration:

1. Families are encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits.
2. Families are encouraged to pre-pay for meals. Reminder notification of pre-payment of meals is sent out weekly.
3. Families will be notified of the school Unpaid Meal Charge Policy. This policy will also be posted on the school website.
4. Elementary students: Lunch fee due slips will be handed to the student by the teacher.

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