

School Meals Policy

Reason For Policy

Minnesota Statutes (§124D.111 SCHOOL MEALS POLICIES) require each school board to adopt a school meals policy to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals, and that school employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. New City School intends to provide meals in a respectful manner and to maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming or otherwise ostracizing a 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 meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school meals program.

Policy Statement

- A. PAYMENT OF MEALS - School Meal Accounts are set up on a prepayment basis. Families may add money to School Meal Accounts in several ways including electronic payments and payments delivered to the school office.
 - a. Students may pay cash for meals, second meals and a la carte items at any time.
 - b. When a School Meals Account does not have a positive balance, a student shall not be allowed to charge a second meal or a la carte items until the account has a positive balance.
 - c. If the school receives school meal aid under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.111, it must make meals available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
 - d. A student always must be served a reimbursable meal even if the student has an outstanding debt.
 - e. Once a meal has been placed on a student's tray or otherwise served to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.
- B. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION - The school will make reasonable efforts to notify families of School Meal Account balances. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school meals program, including, but not limited to, dumping meals, withdrawing a meal that has been served, announcing, or listing students' names publicly, or affixing stickers, stamps, or pins.
- C. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES - The school will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges.
 - a. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meals for their children. The school will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges.
 - b. School Meals Accounts with negative balances of more than \$500 may be turned over for collection assistance. 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.
 - c. The school may not deny any student the opportunity to participate in graduation ceremonies or other commencement activities due to unpaid meal charges.

- d. The school will not impose any other restriction prohibited under Minnesota Statutes section 123B.37 due to unpaid student meal balances. The school will not limit a student's participation in any school activities, graduation ceremonies, field trips, activity clubs, or other extracurricular activities or access to materials, technology, or other items provided to students due to an unpaid student meal balance.
- D. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY - This policy and any pertinent supporting information shall be posted on the school website and will be provide in writing to any student or guardian upon request.

Adopted by the NCS Board of Directors, [August 2023]