

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 534

Adopted: Projected Adoption Date: November 28, 2022

Revised:

534 Unpaid Meal Charges Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy 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 POLICY

- A. St. Mary's School goal is 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 (NSBL) and eliminate stigmatization of children who are unable to pay meal charges.
- B. It is the policy of St. Mary's School to offer lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines.
- C. St. Mary's School strives to ensure that nutritious meals are available to all students, and will work with families to keep account balances positive.
- D. Families may apply for free/reduced- price meal benefits anytime during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to all families in the district prior to the student's first day of classes. In addition, applications are available in the school office or on the district website. If a household income or size change, families can apply for meal benefits anytime during the school year.

III. PAYMENT OF MEALS

- A. Families are required to have a positive balance in their meal account at the beginning of the school year and during the course of the school year.
- B. If the student or family account is less than adequate to pay for lunch meals, school staff will follow procedures listed below:
 - 1. Students in Pre-K, Kindergarten - 8th grade will always be given a meal regardless of meal account status. While the district is under no legal obligation to do so, we at St. Mary's School believe that this is in the best interest of the student.
 - 2. Students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid meal accounts.
 - 3. Students with an overdrawn meal account are not allowed to charge seconds, till their meal account is paid current

IV. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES- NOTIFICATION

- A. St. Mary's will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero. Families will be provided access to meal account status via Renweb, an online parent portal.
- B. Forms of notification are as follows
 - 1. Renweb will initiate an automated low balance email message on a daily basis to households with \$10.00 or below in their meal accounts.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program.
- D. Negative Balances
 - 1. Renweb will initiate an automated low balance email message on a daily basis to households with \$10.00 or below in their meal accounts.

V. COLLECTION

- A. The administrative assistant will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. Unpaid meal charges are designated as delinquent debt when payment is overdue, the debt is considered collectable, and efforts are being made to collect it.
- B. The requirement is all fees owed to St. Mary's School will be paid in full on the last day of attendance for the current school year.

VI. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy and any pertinent supporting information shall be provided on the school's website to:
 - 1. All households at or before the start of each school year.
 - 2. Students and families who transfer into the school district, at time of enrollment; and
 - 3. All school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing the policy.

Reviewed Date:
Approved Date: