



Heritage Elementary – Liberty Traditional School – La Paloma Academy

Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

Updated SY 22-23

1. Federal Requirement

The purpose of this policy is to address the needs of school food authorities while also considering the platform of our attending families. The intent of this memo is to ensure that all our participating families, students and staff have a clear understanding of the unpaid meal charge policy and protocols for administering meals and collecting meal charges where applicable. Until

SY 22-23, students have received meals at no charge due to COVID 19 since March of 2020. As we transition back to pre-COVID operations, we must now reinstate our meal charge policies and guidelines we are required to fulfill as constituents of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs set forth by the USDA.

2. Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures through out our districts to maintain the fiscal integrity of the meal programs as well as ensure that food, labor and operating costs are sustainable while offering students to most nutritious meals, at the least financial burden to participating students and families. Our goals are listed below:

- A. To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of such charges.
- B. To encourage parent/guardian to assume responsibility for meal payments to promote self – responsibility of the student.
- C. To treat all students with dignity, privacy and respect regarding meal accounts
- D. To support positive situations with district staff, business policies, student and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
- E. To establish policies that appeal to individual age groups.

3. Scope of Responsibility

- A. The food service department and designated team / staff members will be responsible for administering outreach in communicating with parents/guardians in efforts to recover unpaid meal charges.

- B. Notification letters will be sent via email, class dojo, and physically home to students who have acquired a negative meal account balance.

- C. Information about where parents can make online payments, or in person payments are available at each site using marketing materials and other informational flyers.
- D. Food service staff / team members will be in frequent contact with parents/guardians via telephone where applicable to ensure meal account balances are available and communicated on a frequent basis.

4. Administration

- A. Families are encouraged to apply for meal benefits through out the school at the very beginning of the school year and at any point where income and/or household information may change.
- B. Families are encouraged to pre-pay for meals using the online payment portal system at www.myschoolbucks.com or send cash or check to the main office or cafeteria. Prepayment information is available to all families upon enrollment or visiting the main office.
- C. Families will be notified of the district unpaid meal charge policy at the beginning of the school year and upon new enrollment. This policy will also be made available on each school website for families to access.
- D. Heritage Elementary School, Liberty Traditional School and La Paloma Academy reserve the right to limit funds that students may accrue to the unpaid meal accounts on a discretionary basis.

5. Unpaid Meal Accounts

- A. Heritage Elementary, Liberty Traditional School and La Paloma Academy will never deny meals to students. We believe that nourishing our students encourages uninterrupted learning, success in academia and overall health of mind and body.
- B. Unpaid meal charges may be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the new school year.

For more information on this policy and procedures set forth – please contact:

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