

Meal Charge Procedures

I. Purpose

Advantage Arts Academy (“the School”) participates in the National School Breakfast Program (“SBP”) and National School Lunch Program (“NSLP”). The School provides meals to its students pursuant to these programs and offers free or reduced-price meals to eligible students. Participating students who are not eligible for free or reduced-price meals may receive meals at the School at the normal paid rate.

These procedures address how the School will handle situations where students eligible to receive reduced-price or paid rate meals at school do not have money in their account or in hand to pay for the cost of a meal at the time of meal service. These procedures also address, among other things, where families can find assistance with applying for free or reduced-price school meals, notification and collection of unpaid meal charges, and how the School will communicate these procedures to families and School personnel.

II. Information about Free or Reduced-Price Meals

- A. Prior to or at the beginning of each school year, the School will provide to the parent or guardian of each student:
 - (i) Information about school meals, including prices for the meals and acceptable methods of paying for the meals;
 - (ii) Information about the SBP and NSLP, including how students qualify for free or reduced-priced meals under the programs; and
 - (iii) An application for free or reduced-priced meals under the SBP and NSLP.

- B. The School will provide the information and application as follows:
 - (i) Through posting the information and applications on the School’s website and through emailing parents a link to the information and applications on the School’s website. The School will also provide hard copies of the information and applications to all parents who request hard copies.
 - (ii) The School will not provide the information and application at the end of the school year for the next school year, but will provide the information and application on or after July 1 of each year.

- C. Completed applications should be returned to the School as soon as possible, but completed applications will be accepted by the School throughout the year. Parents or guardians should contact the School’s front office at 801-878-8622 for questions about or assistance with applying for free or reduced-priced school meals.

III. Students Unable to Pay for Meals

- A. Students who are unable to pay for a meal at the time of meal service, either because they don’t have sufficient money in their meal account or on their person, will still be allowed to charge the meal to their meal account.

- B. Students who have qualified for free meals under the SBP and NSLP are not required to pay for reimbursable meals at the School.
- C. Per Utah Code § 53F-2-423, students who have qualified for reduced-price meals under the NSLP are not required to pay for reimbursable lunches at the School.

IV. Alternate Meals

- A. Students whose meal account balance is negative in the amount of -\$20.00 or more will not be allowed to charge a regular reimbursable meal to their account. However, under such circumstances, the School will offer such students an alternate meal for lunch. The alternate lunch meal will consist of milk, a roll, and some fruit. The School will charge a student's meal account \$1 for alternate meals.
- B. This section does not apply to students who have qualified for free meals under the SBP and NSLP, as such students are not required to pay for reimbursable meals at the School and will never be denied a regular reimbursable meal by the School.
- C. Per Utah Code § 53F-2-423, this section also does not apply to students who have qualified for reduced-price meals under the NSLP, as such students are not required to pay for reimbursable lunches at the School and will never be denied a regular reimbursable lunch by the School.

V. Notifications Regarding Balances; Collection Efforts

- A. The School will notify parents or guardians of low meal account balances by email, telephone, and/or written letters and request that additional payment on the account be made prior to the account reaching a negative balance.
- B. The School will notify parents or guardians of negative meal account balances. When a student's meal account has a negative balance, the School will notify the student's parent or guardian of the negative account balance by email, telephone, and/or written letters. Specifically, the School may send parents or guardians weekly emails when meal account balances are from -\$0.01 to -\$10.00 and make regular phone calls when meal account balances are from -\$10.00 to -\$35.00. In such communications the School will request parents or guardians to make payment on the accounts as soon as possible.
- C. When a student's meal account reaches a negative balance of at least -\$35.00, the School will continue to notify parents or guardians as described above and may also turn the account over to collections.
- D. The School may contact parents or guardians of students with delinquent meal accounts to inquire if the household might be eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits under SBP and NSLP.

- E. The front office at the School is generally responsible for managing meal account balances and balance notifications and can be reached at 801-878-8622 for questions or concerns related to such matters.
- F. The front office at the School is generally responsible for managing the School's collection efforts and can be reached at 801-878-8622 for questions or concerns related to such matters.
- G. The School will maintain documentation of the balance notifications and collection efforts described above, as this may be requested as part of federal or state audits.

VI. Communication of Procedures

- A. Prior to or at the beginning of each school year, and upon a student transferring to the School during the school year, the School will provide to the parent or guardian of each student a written copy of these procedures by including them in the registration materials and by providing them at back-to-school night. The School will also provide a written copy of these procedures to all parents who request a copy.
- B. In order to ensure that these procedures are applied consistently and correctly, the School will also annually provide a copy of these procedures to all School personnel who are responsible for or involved in:
 - (i) Collecting payment for meals at the time of meal service;
 - (ii) Notifying parents or guardians of low or negative meal account balances;
 - (iii) Collection efforts for delinquent meal accounts;
 - (iv) Distributing these procedures and the information described in Section II; and
 - (v) Enforcing any aspect of these procedures.
- C. The School will post these procedures on its website and may also choose to provide additional copies to parents or guardians of students whose meal accounts reach a negative balance.
- D. The School will maintain documentation of the communication methods described above, as this may be requested as part of federal or state audits.
- E. Students, parents, and the School community were involved in developing these communication procedures.

VII. Review of Procedures

- A. The School will review these procedures annually and revise them as it deems necessary.