

Adopted: 5/14/2019

Revised: _____

**NASHA SHKOLA POLICY No.7.16
UNPAID MEAL CHARGES**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the Nasha Shkola (NS) nutrition program and that NS employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. 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 school meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

II. PAYMENT OF MEALS

- A. All students are allowed to charge meals. NS keeps a record of charged meals and bills the families accordingly on the weekly basis.
- B. NS receives school lunch aid under Minn. Stat. § 124D.111. NS makes lunch available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
- C. A student with an outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal, and the family will be billed accordingly in the end of the week.
- D. NS doesn't provide an alternate meal that meets federal and state requirements to a student who does not have sufficient funds in the student's account or cannot pay cash for a meal.
- E. If a parent or guardian chooses to send in one payment it is not divided between sibling accounts, and applied to the entire sibling group.

III. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION

- A. NS will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero, on weekly basis.
- B. Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance on a weekly basis (every 5 days). Families will be notified by email or letters sent home.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program.

IV. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

- A. NS will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meals for their children.
- B. NS 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.

V. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy and any pertinent supporting information shall be provided in writing (i.e., mail, email, back-to-school packet, student handbook, etc.) to:
 - 1. all households at or before the start of each school year;
 - 2. students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment; and
 - 3. all NS personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.
- B. NS will post the policy on the school district’s website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124D.111, Subd. 4
 42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act)
 7 C.F.R. § 210 *et seq.* (School Lunch Program Regulations)
 7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)
 USDA Policy Memorandum SP 46-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policies (2016)
 USDA Policy Memorandum SP 47-2016, Unpaid Meal Charges: Clarification on Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments (2016)
 USDA Policy Memorandum SP 23-2017, Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&A