

LIONSGATE ACADEMY

612 FOOD SERVICE POLICY

Original Adoption Date: 8/15/2017

Revision Date(s): September 2020, 10/3/2023

Review Date(s):

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for lunch account procedures throughout the buildings in the provision of meals to students.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Lionsgate Academy understands that proper nutritional intake is essential for adequate learning to occur.
- B. Lionsgate Academy recognizes the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide lunch for their children by either a cold lunch from home or assuring that their student participates in the school lunch program.
- C. Lionsgate Academy will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations, following the guidelines of the USDA.
- D. Lionsgate Academy strives to provide meals in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.

III. FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL

- A. Lionsgate Academy shall designate an appropriate person(s) to be responsible for the food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- B. As part of Lionsgate's responsibility to operate a food service program, it will provide continuing professional development to all food service personnel in schools.

IV. PURCHASING MEALS

- A. Student Lunch Accounts
 - 1. Lionsgate Academy participates in the MN Free School Meals Program. This includes one free breakfast and one free lunch each day to students at participating sites offering meal service.
 - 2. Students may purchase additional meals and/or milk if they have sufficient funds in their meal accounts.
 - 3. Once a meal has been placed on a student's tray or otherwise served to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.

4. Cash or checks will be taken by food service staff and the full amount will be deposited into the student's account. No change will be given to the student or parent during this transaction. An online lunch payment program will be provided on the [Lionsgate Academy](#) website.
 5. All students will have an individual lunch account number. A single common number for families with more than one student in the school system will not be used. Each student's account is managed separately.
 6. Students are not allowed to borrow lunch credits from another student.
 7. Students are not allowed to eat from another student's lunch tray for health and sanitation reasons.
- B. Free and Reduced Price Lunches
1. While Lionsgate Academy participates in the MN Free School Meals Program, all families should still complete an Application for Educational benefits. Families may apply for free or reduced price lunches at any time during the school year.
 2. Applications for free and reduced lunches are mailed to every family enrolled at Lionsgate Academy prior to the start of the school year. The applications are also made available on the website, at Back to School night, and in each school building office, school kitchen, and district business office. Lunch applications will also be mailed or emailed to any parent requesting one.
 3. Families who qualify for free or reduced lunches in any given year will be allowed to receive these same benefits for up to 30 calendar days into the next school year. Lionsgate Academy is required to verify a percentage of the approved Applications for Educational Benefits each school year and report verification results to the Minnesota Department of Education. Income information or case number may be checked.

V. LACTOSE INTOLERANT STUDENTS AND MILK SUBSTITUTION

- A. Milk Substitution for Lactose Intolerant Students
1. Minnesota law requires that if a school receives a written request from a parent of a lactose intolerant student, the school must provide lactose reduced milk for that student.
 - a. The request must be re-written each school year prior to September 30th.
 2. Juice is not a substitute for milk.
- B. Milk Substitutions for Disabled Students
1. Substitutions must be made for disabled students if the student submits a written medical statement signed by a licensed physician that indicates how the disability affects the diet and the substitutions that must be made.
 2. The medical statement must be reviewed, renewed and reissued each school year prior to September 30.

VI. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

- A. The charter school 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 or reduced-price meals for their children.
 - 1. Students, parents or guardians in grades 7 through 12 will be given electronic (e-mail), verbal (robo-call) and/or written notification when their lunch account balance is \$5.00 or less.
- B. Lionsgate Academy reserves its right to pursue all legal remedies to collect negative balances, up to and including referring accounts to a collection agency or pursuing legal action.
- C. Lionsgate Academy has the obligation to complete and process an application for the free and reduced lunch program for those students who are homeless or who have run away from home.
- D. The charter school will not impose any other restriction prohibited under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.37 due to unpaid student meal balances. The charter school will not limit a student's participation in any school activities, graduation ceremonies, field trips, athletics, activity clubs, or other extracurricular activities or access to materials, technology, or other items provided to students due to an unpaid student meal balance.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees)

Minn. Stat. 124D.111 School Meals Policies; Lunch Aid; Food Service Accounting

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

Cross References:

Lionsgate Academy Policy 615 - Wellness Policy