

Adopted: February 25, 2019

Revised:

**AGAMIM CLASSICAL ACADEMY
POLICY**

Non-Instructional Operations and Business Services, No. 701

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES PROCEDURES

Agamim Classical Academy will follow appropriate debt collection practices when attempting to recover unpaid meal charges. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the school's nutrition program and that school employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The procedure seeks to allow Agamim students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day and to minimize identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals while also maintaining the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

I. PAYMENT OF MEALS

- A. Agamim receives school lunch aid under Minn. Stat. § 124D.111, so the school must make lunch available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
- B. When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge a snack item or additional food (if available for purchase).
- C. If a parent or guardian chooses to send in one payment that is to be divided between sibling accounts, the parent or guardian must specify how the funds are to be distributed to the students' accounts. Funds may not be transferred between sibling accounts unless written permission is received from the parent or guardian.

II. LOW OR NEGATIVE ACCOUNT BALANCES – NOTIFICATION

- A. The school will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero.
- B. Families will be notified of the account balance by automated calling system, and letters will be sent home.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program.

III. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

A. The school will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Payment plans may be scheduled to help families pay off their unpaid charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meals for their children.

B. The school 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.

C. The school may not enlist the assistance of non-school employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.

IV. COMMUNICATION OF PROCEDURE

A. This procedure and any pertinent supporting information shall be provided in writing via back-to-school packet and student/family welcome guide or handbook to:

1. all households at or before the start of each school year;
2. students and families who transfer into the school, at the time of enrollment; and
3. all school personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.

B. The school will post the procedure on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 1241.11, 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

MSBA Model Policy 534 Unpaid Meal Charges