



EARLY LIGHT ACADEMY

Meal Charge & Alternate Meal Administrative Procedures

I. Purpose

Early Light Academy (“the School”) participates in the School Breakfast Program (“SBP”) and the 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, alternate 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 to parents or guardians as follows:
 - (i) The School will provide hard copies of the information and application at back-to-school night and upon request throughout the school year. The School will also provide electronic copies of the information and application via email or on the School’s website.
 - (ii) The School will also provide parents and guardians with access to computers at back-to-school night, during parent-teacher conferences, and during regular business hours, as needed, to fill out electronic applications for free and reduced-priced meals under the SBP and NSLP. The School will add free and reduced-price meal application links to its website for use by parents or guardians.

- (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 Michelle Drachman at 801-302-5988 or mdrachman@earlylightacademy.org 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 be allowed to charge the meal to their meal account unless their meal account balance is negative in the amount of -\$15.00 or more.
- B. Students allowed to charge a meal to their meal account under the terms described above will receive a regular reimbursable meal as opposed to an alternate meal.
- C. 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.
- D. This Section also does not apply to the lunches of students who have qualified for reduced-price meals under the NSLP. 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 accounts have a negative balance of -\$15.00 or more will not be allowed to charge a regular reimbursable meal to their account. Under those circumstances the School will offer such students an alternate meal. The School will charge such students \$1.00 for an alternate meal. This paragraph 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. Per Utah Code § 53F-2-423, this paragraph also does not apply to the lunches of 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.
- B. Alternate meals may consist of fruit, a roll, and a carton of milk.

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.
- B. The School will notify parents or guardians of negative meal account balances and request payment on the accounts by such methods as:
 - (i) Weekly emails when meal account balance is from $-\$.01$ to $-\$15.00$; and
 - (ii) Regular phone calls when meal account balance is from $-\$15.01$ to $-\$35.00$.
- C. When a student's meal account reaches a negative balance of more than $-\$35.00$, 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. Michelle Drachman at the School is generally responsible for managing meal account balances and balance notifications and can be reached at 801-302-5988 or mdrachman@earlylightacademy.org for questions or concerns related to such matters.
- F. Michelle Drachman at the School is generally responsible for managing the School's collection efforts and can be reached at 801-302-5988 or mdrachman@earlylightacademy.org 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 posting them on the School's website, by including them in student registration materials, and by sending hard copies home with students.
- 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.