

School Meal Policy Template

On a federal level, all School Food Authorities (SFAs) operating National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program must have a written policy to address situations where children participating at the reduced price or paid rate do not have money to cover the cost of a meal at the time of the meal service.

On March 17, 2023, Governor Walz signed the MN Free School Meals bill into law. The MN Free School Meals Program is a permanent program that provides state reimbursement to schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program so that students can have one breakfast and one lunch at no cost at school. This program is detailed in MN 124D.111. This means that beginning July 1, 2023, debt resulting from a lack of funds for a reimbursable meal at school will no longer occur.

The Minnesota Free School Meals Program and the required elements of this policy are stated in MN124D.111.

PURPOSE

Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals program as outlined in Minn. Statute 124D.111 Subdivision 1. In addition, this policy is to ensure that school district employees, families, and students have an understanding of the expectations regarding unpaid meal charges.

MEAL SERVICE

Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals Program, and therefore all enrolled students will receive one breakfast and one lunch at no charge while at school regardless of an outstanding meal balance. All reimbursable meals offered meet state and federal guidelines. Providing an alternate meal not on the scheduled menu violates Minnesota law (Minn. Statute 124D.111, subdivision 5), except where a special diet is prescribed by an authorized medical professional for a specific student.

Point of Service

In order for Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 to receive State and Federal reimbursement for meals served, each student must be identified at the point of service. Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 uses JMC Point of Service to record the students meal counts.

All students will be treated respectfully and in accordance with Minn. Statute 124D.111, Subdivision 5.

Payment at the Point of Service

Second Meal Selection of Food Sales are any food or beverage not included in the reimbursable meal.

Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 does provide an opportunity for students to purchase food, beverage or second meals in addition to the meal(s) at no cost, but JMC will be charged for the secondary meal or ala carte products.

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

Prior year unpaid meal charges: The Minnesota Free Meals Program does not address debt incurred previous to the program's implementation.

Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 will continue to utilize its local process for addressing delinquent meal accounts. It is the parents' responsibility to check on account balances. This can be done online or by calling the main office. A note will be emailed and/or sent home as needed reminding parents to send money for their student's meal account. Students may charge breakfast and lunch up to a total debit of three meals (-\$9.60 full pay, -\$1.20 reduced).

If a debit accumulates, a note will be sent home via E-mail alerting parents that a balance is due and reminding them to send money for their students meal account. If an E-mail is not available or there is no response, a letter will be sent via U.S. Mail. If a balance remains after 2 weeks the MARSS/CLiCs administrator or Director of Operations will make phone contact with families of students who have exceeded the meal charge limits.

All fines/fees need to be paid by the end of the school year in June. If fines/fees are not paid Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 will send the balance to collections.

When the method to collect the funds is unsuccessful, Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 is required to write-off the bad debt using General Funds or other funds of the district such as donations designated for that purpose. School Nutrition Funds cannot be used for this purpose per 2 CFR Part 200.426.

COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

This policy and any pertinent supporting information will be provided in writing (i.e., mail, email, back-to-school packet, student handbook, etc.) to: All households at or before the start of each school year; Students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment.

All school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 will post this policy on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

When contracting with a Food Service Management Company or Vended Meal Provider Laura Jeffrey Academy, District #4164 will ensure that any third-party provider with whom the school district enters into either an original or modified contract after July 1, 2021, adheres to the school district's school meals policy.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

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