



Document Name: Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

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## 1.0 Purpose

Wasatch Waldorf Charter School (the “School”), as a participant in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), establishes the following meal charge policy to comply with requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service. This policy addresses circumstances in which children who are participating in the School Lunch program at a reduced or paid rate do not have money in their account to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. This policy is intended to balance the need for financial solvency of the School Lunch program with the importance of ensuring all Wasatch Waldorf Charter School students have access to the healthy meals they need to grow, learn, and thrive.

## 2.0 Definitions

For purposes of this Policy, the term “**delinquent debt**” refers to unpaid meal charges. Debt is classified as delinquent as long as it is considered collectable and efforts are being made to collect it.

For purposes of this policy, the term “**bad debt**” refers to unpaid meal debt that has been determined to be uncollectible in accordance with this policy.

## 3.0 Policy Content

### 3.1 General Requirement to Pre-Pay for Meals

Unless eligible and approved for free meals, families are required to pre-pay for student meals through their account on the School Lunch webpage or in person at the front office.

### 3.2 Charging Meals

Students who are ineligible for free school meals and who do not have sufficient funds in their School Lunch account may charge meals, but in no event may a student's School Lunch account exceed a negative balance of \$100. Students with a School Lunch account with a negative balance exceeding \$100 will not be permitted to participate in the School Lunch program.

A student who charges a meal will receive the same NSLP-reimbursable meal that is served to all other students participating in the School Lunch program.

### 3.3 Collection of Delinquent Debt

The School will make reasonable efforts to avoid meal charges, to notify families of low balances in student School Lunch accounts, and to collect delinquent debt. Specifically, the School will take the following actions:

- The School will make information and applications regarding free and reduced price school meals available on the School's website and in the School's front office;
- The School will send automatically generated monthly emails to families notifying them of the balances in their School Lunch accounts;
- The School's Kitchen Manager will send an email and/or automatically generated text message to the parents or guardians of any student who charges a meal, reminding the parents or guardians of this Policy and requesting payment;
- The School's Kitchen Manager will send a letter and/or make a phone call to the parents or guardians of any student whose School Lunch account reaches a negative balance of \$75.00, requesting an in-person meeting with the Kitchen Manager and/or Director to

discuss this Policy, repayment options, the consequences of continued non-payment and available assistance for free or reduced price school meals;

- Subject to the discretion of the Director, parents/guardians who are in debt of \$75 or more for meals must agree to a repayment plan in order for their student(s) to be permitted to continue to charge meals;
- The School's Kitchen Manager or Director will send a letter and/or make a phone call to the parents or guardians of any student whose School Lunch account reaches a negative balance of \$100, informing them that their student(s) will no longer be able to receive meals through the School Lunch program, until the debt is paid.

The School will begin collection efforts on any School Lunch debt that exceeds \$75. As set forth above, the first step in this collection effort is an in-person meeting with the parents/guardians and the Kitchen Manager and/or Director. Parents/guardians will be requested to either pay the debt immediately or enter into a repayment plan. Repayment plans will, in most instances, be drafted to ensure that the debt is fully paid before the end of the school year. Unpaid meal charges may, however, be carried over at the end of the school year, and collection efforts may thus continue into the next school year. The School may continue to pursue collection efforts into a subsequent school year even if a family is no longer enrolled in the School in that subsequent year. The consequences of non-payment of a delinquent debt will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

In all instances, School officials will endeavor to communicate directly with adults in the household if a payment is overdue, rather than communicating with or through a student.

### **3.4 Bad Debt**

The Kitchen Manager shall be responsible for reporting on collection efforts for delinquent debt to the Business Manager. The Business Manager shall report to Board Treasurer who shall, based on these reports, determine when debt is uncollectable and should be reclassified as bad debt at the end of each school year. In accordance with federal regulations, the School's Nonprofit School Food Service Account resources shall not be used to cover costs related to bad debt, and the Nonprofit School Food Service Account's operating losses from unpaid meal costs will be restored from non-Federal sources.



The Kitchen Manager is responsible for maintaining and retaining records regarding the establishment and handling of bad debt due to unpaid meal charges, as outlined in 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17) and 7 CFR 210.15(b).

### **3.5 Policy Communication**

This policy will be included with student registration materials, posted on the School's website, and included in the student handbook.

This policy will be distributed to all School staff responsible for its enforcement, including the Kitchen Manager and all kitchen staff.

## **4.0 Relevant Procedures, Guidelines & Restrictions 2**

CFR Part 200, Section 143; Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

See also <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges>

## **5.0 Exhibits / Appendices / Forms**