

Adopted: February 23, 2016
Revised: October 31, 2017
Reviewed: September 25, 2018
Revised: June 5, 2020
Reviewed: April 27, 2021
Reviewed: May 31, 2022
Reviewed: May 28, 2024

ATHLOS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY SCHOOL MEAL & PAYMENT POLICY No. 7.12

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all students attending Athlos Leadership Academy (“Athlos”) have access to healthy school meals and to outline the financial responsibilities of students, parents/guardians, and Athlos concerning school lunches.

II. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

- A. It is the policy of Athlos Leadership Academy to provide nutritious meals to students to promote healthy eating habits and enhance learning as well as maintain the financial integrity of the National School Breakfast and Lunch program and eliminate the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay meal charges.
- B. It is the policy of Athlos Leadership Academy to offer breakfast and lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines.

III. FREE AND REDUCED MEALS

- A. Students may qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. All Athlos families are encouraged to apply. State funds help pay for reduced price meals, so all students approved for free or reduced-price school meals will receive school meals at no charge.
- B. Meal applications are distributed to all families in the district prior to the student’s first day of classes. An application must be completed and submitted for an eligibility determination to be made. An eligibility determination must be made *before* a student may receive free or reduced-price meal benefit, and the benefit cannot be backdated. A student is required to pay the full price of any meal until an eligibility determination letter is sent to the parent/guardian.

- C. Eligibility does not carry over from the previous school year, and a new application must be submitted every school year. Applications are accepted throughout the school year, and a parent/guardian may reapply at any time during the school year.

The Application for Educational Benefits for free or reduced-price school meals is available on the school website or at the front desk of the school.

IV. MEAL PAYMENT AND CHARGE POLICY

- A. All students (including those receiving free or reduced-price meals) have a meal account and are assigned a pin number to use when they go through the cafeteria line. The student's pin number must be used for any school meal or additional purchase and may only be used for purchases by the student with the assigned pin.
- B. All meals are served on a pre-paid basis. Breakfast may not be charged to a student's account resulting in a negative balance. Sufficient funds must also be available in the student's account for extra milk, an extra entrée, or any other purchase in addition to a regular school lunch.
- C. Students paying for meals will be allowed to charge two (2) lunches to their account resulting in a negative balance if lunch money is forgotten or otherwise unpaid. After the second lunch charge, the student will not be issued a regular school menu lunch and will receive a courtesy cheese sandwich and drink until the meal balance is paid. If a student receives a courtesy cheese sandwich for 3 consecutive days without the account being brought positive, Athlos will require the family to settle the student's account. Athlos will work with families on a payment plan if needed. In the event a parent/guardian does not pay their student's bill, legal action may be taken.
- D. Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will always be served a meal regardless of unpaid food service accounts. When a student eligible for PAID meals has "cash in hand" to pay for a meal, the student will be served a meal regardless of unpaid food service accounts. The "cash in hand" will not be applied to past due balances.

V. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Payment

It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to ensure the student has sufficient funds to receive meals at school. Parents/guardians may purchase any number of meals in advance at the Athlos front office through the Student Accounts Coordinator or by putting funding in the student's meal account. Electronic payments or in person cash payments at Athlos are the *only* acceptable forms of payment. Personal checks will not be accepted.

B. Free or Reduced-price Meal Application for Educational Benefits

It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to ensure any free or reduced-price meal Application for Educational Benefits is completed and submitted to Athlos.

VI. DENYING MEALS

- A. Athlos will not deny meals as a form of disciplinary action against students.
- B. Any student who is not issued a regular school lunch will receive a courtesy sandwich and drink.

VII. DONATED FUNDS

- A. Athlos will set aside donated funds and they will be dispersed to students at the discretion of the superintendent for food service assistance.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. § 1751 *et. seq.*
Minn. Stat. Ch. 124E (Charter Schools)
Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.111 - 124D.1195 (School Breakfast & Lunch)