



85 Delaware Avenue
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Assistant Principal
Samantha Candreva

Superintendent
Brigid Collins, Ed.D.

Building Principal
Chris Aguirre

ANDES CENTRAL SCHOOL

Prohibition Against Meal Shaming Plan

Updated: 2/22/25

I. Purpose

Andes Central School is committed to ensuring that all students have access to nutritious, low- or no-cost meals each school day, regardless of their ability to pay. No student will be denied a meal, singled out, or treated differently due to unpaid meal charges.

Unpaid meal charges can place a financial burden on the district, and this policy ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, including the **USDA Child Nutrition Program** and **New York State Education Law**. The goal is to provide oversight and accountability in collecting outstanding student meal balances while ensuring that no student experiences stigma, distress, or embarrassment due to their meal account status.

II. Policy Overview

1. Meal Access for All Students

- Students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals will always receive them without charge.
- Students who do not qualify for free meals but have insufficient funds will still receive a complete, reimbursable meal.



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2. Meal Charging Policy

- Students may charge for meals when they do not have sufficient funds. However, charging for **a la carte items, second meals, or adult meals** is **not permitted**.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child's meal account remains in good standing.

3. Notification and Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges

- Families will be notified of **low or negative balances** through written notices, automated calls, or other direct communication methods.
- Andes Central School will work with families to establish **payment plans** if needed.

4. Prohibition Against Meal Shaming

- No student will be publicly identified, denied a meal, or required to do chores or other work as a condition of receiving a meal.
- School staff will handle unpaid meal issues discreetly and sensitively to avoid embarrassment or distress for the student.

III. Communication and Support

- This policy will be **communicated to families annually** and posted on the school website.

Families experiencing **financial hardship** will be encouraged to apply for the **Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program** anytime during the school year.