

### **8550 – Unpaid Meal Charges/Outstanding Food Charges**

The Board of Education understands a student may forget to bring lunch or money to purchase lunch to school on a school day. When this happens, the food service program will provide a student a lunch with an expectation payment will be made the next school day or shortly thereafter. However, there may be circumstances when payment is not made and a student's school lunch bill is in arrears. The school district will manage a student's lunch bill that is in arrears in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 and this Policy.

In the event a student's school lunch bill is in arrears in excess of the price of three (3) lunches, the student will continue to receive lunch and their account will be charged accordingly. The Building Principal (or designee) will contact the student's parent to provide notice of the amount in arrears and will provide the parent a period of ten (10) school days to pay the full amount due. If the student's parent does not make full payment to the Building Principal (or designee) by the end of the ten (10) school days, the Building Principal (or designee) will again contact the student's parent to provide a second notice that their child's lunch bill is in arrears. If payment in full is not made within one (1) week from the date of the second notice, the student will not be served school lunch without payment for that day's lunch beginning the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) calendar day from the date of the second notice.

A parent who has received a second notice their child's lunch bill is in arrears and who has not made payment in full within one (1) week from the date of the second notice will be requested to meet with the Building Principal (or designee) to discuss and resolve the matter.

A parent's refusal to meet or take other steps to resolve the matter may be indicative of more serious issues in the family or household. In these situations, the Building Principal (or designee) will consult with and seek necessary services from both the County Board of Social Services and the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, as appropriate.

If the student's lunch bill is in arrears, but the student has the money to purchase lunch, the student will be provided lunch and the food service program will not use the student's money to repay previously unpaid charges if the student intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

The food service program will prevent the overt identification of children through the method of payment used to purchase a meal and whose lunch bill is in arrears.

In accordance with the provisions of the United States Department of Agriculture, this Policy will be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the school or school district during the school year. The school district may post this Policy on the school or school district's website provided there is a method in place to ensure this Policy reaches all households, particularly those households without access to a computer or the Internet.

This Policy will also be provided to all school and food service staff responsible for the enforcement of this Policy, including school administrators to ensure this Policy is supported.



The food service program will comply with all meal charge policy requirements of the United States and New Jersey Department of Agriculture and N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21.

### **Legal Reference**

N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21

United States Department of Agriculture SP 23-2017 – March 23, 2017

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