

## UNPAID MEAL CHARGES/OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES (M)

### 8550 UNPAID MEAL CHARGES/OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES (M)

The Board of Education understands a student may forget to bring breakfast or lunch, as applicable, or money to purchase breakfast or lunch to school on a school day. When this happens, the food service program will provide a student a breakfast or 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 breakfast/lunch bill is in arrears. The school district will manage a student's breakfast or lunch bill that is in arrears in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 and this Policy.

When a student's account drops to a zero balance, parents will receive a computer generated email from our food service provider to advise them of the situation.

The first of the month, for any student accounts with a negative balance of over \$10.00, the parents will receive a computer generated email from our food service provider to advise them of the situation.

When a student's account is at a negative balance of \$25.00, our food service provider will email a computer generated letter to advise parents of the situation. The letter will include a sentence to let parents know if they are incurring any type of hardship, they should speak with their building Principal or designee. If the Principal or designee realizes there is a hardship, they should provide the parents with the free and reduced lunch information or direct them to the Business Office.

When a student's account is at a negative balance of \$50.00, our food service provider will make a personal telephone call to parents to let them know payment must be made within seven days.

If the parent does not pay off the negative balance within seven days of the telephone call, our food service provider will send the parents a certified letter, return receipt requested, to alert them that their child will be unable to purchase lunch until the balance is paid off and money is placed in the account.

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 Principal or designee shall 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.



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When a parent's routine failure to provide breakfast or lunch is reasonably suspected to be indicative of child abuse or neglect, the Principal or designee shall immediately report such suspicion to the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency as required in N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10. Such reporting shall not be delayed to accommodate a parent's meeting with the Principal or designee.

On June 1, our food service provider will provide all of the building Principals and the Business Office with a list of student accounts with a negative balance over \$25.00.

The Principals will, in turn, send an email to parents reminding them that all negative balances over \$25.00 need to be satisfied prior to the end of the school year or they will be denied access to the Genesis Parent Portal. This will prohibit parents from being able to view class assignments and report cards. The Administrative Assistant in the Business Office will be responsible for restricting parent access. Once payment is received, the portal will be reopened.

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

In accordance with the provisions of the United States Department of Agriculture, this Policy shall be posted on the school district's website.

This Policy shall 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.

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

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

Adopted:

