

# POLICY GUIDE

OPERATIONS

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**Unpaid Meal Charges/Outstanding Food Service**

Charges

May 17

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[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 206, 208 and 212]

## 8550 UNPAID MEAL CHARGES/OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES

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 or 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.

In the event a student's school lunch or breakfast bill is in arrears in excess of \$5.00, the student will continue to receive lunch or breakfast and their account will be charged accordingly. The Principal or designee shall contact the student's parent to provide notice of the amount in arrears and shall provide the parent a period of five school days to pay the full amount due. During which time the student will be provided an alternate breakfast or lunch, as applicable, that will contain the essentials in balanced nutritional selections as prescribed by the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and the Food and Nutrition Services of the United State Department of Agriculture.

If the student's parent does not make full payment to the Principal or designee by the end of the five school days, the Principal or designee shall again contact the student's parent to provide a second notice that their child's breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears. If payment in full is not made within 2 days from the date of the second notice, the school will not provide a student a breakfast or lunch and will immediately inform the Principal or designee, who will contact the student's parent to arrange for breakfast or lunch or money for breakfast or lunch to be brought from home to school for the student.



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A parent's refusal to provide lunch or breakfast for their child or money to purchase lunch or breakfast 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.

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.]

Once the steps above are exhausted, any outstanding balances will be turned over to a collections lawyer. At that time, you will be responsible not only for any outstanding balances owed to the school, but also any court and lawyer fees incurred during the process of collection.

