

# **POLICY**

## **Essex County Vocational Technical Board of Education**

Section: Operations

8550. OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES

Date Created: November, 2015

### **8550- OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES**

The Board of Education understands a student may forget to bring lunch, as applicable, or money to purchase lunch to school on a school day. When a student's account does not contain sufficient funds to purchase a standard paid lunch, students may receive standard paid lunches on a temporary-credit basis. The food service program will provide a student 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 \$15.25, the student will receive lunch an alternative lunch paid by the district 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. 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 ten school days to pay the full amount due. If the student's parent does not make full payment to the Principal or designee by the end of the ten school days, the Principal or designee shall again contact the student's parent to provide a second notice that their child's lunch or bill is in arrears. This alternate meal will be provided until the bill in arrears is paid in full.

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 week from the date of the second notice will be requested to meet with the Principal or designee to discuss and resolve the matter and their access to Powerschool with be suspended.

Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring the amount of money in their students' accounts and for paying balances due a timely manner. The business administrator is responsible for the administration and operation of the school lunch program in keeping with federal and state laws and the policies and directives of the board.

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.

When a parent's routine failure to provide 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.

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 breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears.

In accordance with the provisions of the United States Department of Agriculture, this Policy shall 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 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: 14 January 2019