

## FILE CODE 3542 SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

**MONITORED**

**MANDATED**

**OTHER REASONS**

The school lunch program shall make a nutritionally adequate lunch available to every pupil and shall operate on the most economically feasible basis. It shall be operated in strict compliance with all laws and regulations pertaining to health, sanitation and safety; internal accounting; employment practices; nutritional standards; costs of lunches; and periodic reporting required by New Jersey law.

The board of education believes that regularly consumed nutrition supports student achievement. Students are better able to concentrate in school and have more energy when they have regular meals. The board considers lunch to be an essential educational tool. In the same way students with the support of their parent/guardians are expected to come prepared to class adequately dressed, with the necessary books and completed assignments, all students shall be expected to take responsibility for their individual lunch.

Qualified students whose families have a financial hardship may apply for assistance according to policy 3542.31 Free or Reduced Price Lunches, Milk. The procedures for the administration of the free and reduced price meal program of this school district will be the same as those prescribed in current state and federal laws and regulations.

The board shall strive to make affordable meals available to all students. Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals or milk shall receive school lunch through the school lunch program for a fee that is established by the board. Any student who has a hardship but does not qualify for free and reduced price lunches or milk, may be considered for other assistance on a case by case basis.

The purchase of meals through the school lunch program shall be optional and shall not prevent any student from bringing their own lunch to school.

The business administrator or designee shall develop and implement procedures for the responsible accounting and tracking of revenues and expenses generated by the school lunch program. The business administrator or designee shall oversee the notification of parents/guardians for the payment of charges and arrears associated with the school lunch program.

### Procedures for Charging Lunch

Students who forget lunch or lunch money may receive lunch through the school lunch program according to the following rules:

- Elementary Schools

Students will be permitted to charge up to \$50.00 for meals before further action is taken.

- Middle Schools

Students will be permitted to charge up to \$25.00 for meals before further action is taken.

- High School

Students will be permitted to charge up to \$25.00 for meals before further action is taken.

### District-Wide

- A. No a la carte items may be charged.
- B. Students who have a negative balance may not purchase a la carte items. Snack money shall be applied to any unpaid meal account balance.
- C. Families in financial need are encouraged to apply for free and reduced meals.
- D. Parents will be notified on a monthly basis during the school year of a delinquent account. Parents may elect to change the amount of allowed charges to any amount below the above stated amounts by contacting either the business office or the food service company.
- E. All meal account balances will be carried over to the subsequent school year.
- F. When a student reaches the above amount, parent/guardian will be notified in writing that they have 10 school days to pay the balance in full. If the parent/guardian does not make full payment by the end of the 10 school days, the district will provide a second notice that school breakfast or school lunch, as applicable, will not be served to the student beginning one week from the date of this second notice unless payment is made in full. During this process, an alternative meal may be served to the student.

- G. Administrators shall work cooperatively with the business office and the food service company to resolve delinquent accounts. The school board authorizes administrators to collect delinquent food service charges by withholding privileges to participate in school-sponsored activities. Administrators shall also make a reasonable effort to collect on delinquent accounts prior to the student graduating or transferring out of the district.
- H. If a family no longer has children attending school, moves out of the district, or becomes eligible for free meals, the family may request reimbursement of any balance in the student's account. Funds for students continuing the following school year will remain in the student account for the next school year.

The Superintendent 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.

Date: July 27, 2015

Amended: October 30, 2018

Legal References: Use legal reference sheet.

Key Words

School Lunch, Food Service, Nutrition, Wellness,

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**Linden Public Schools**

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