

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE POLICY #8550 – UNPAID MEAL CHARGES/
OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE CHARGES

Westbridge Academy understands a student may forget to bring breakfast or lunch, as applicable, or money to purchase 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. Westbridge Academy will manage a student's 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 \$10.00, the student will continue to receive lunch or breakfast and their account will be charged accordingly. The Business Office 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 Business office or designee by the end of the ten school days, the Business Office or designee shall 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 one week from the date of the second notice, 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 States Department of Agriculture beginning the eighth calendar day from the date of the second notice. This alternate **meal** will be provided until the bill in arrears is in excess of \$20.00, at which time the student will not be served school breakfast or lunch, as applicable.

A parent who has received a second notice their child's lunch or breakfast 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.

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 situation, 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.

If the student's breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears, but the student has the money to purchase breakfast or lunch, the student will be provided breakfast or 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 the households transferring to the school during the school year. The school district may post this Policy on the school's website provided there is a method in place to ensure 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

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