

Policy List

First Reading: Wednesday, February 26, 2025

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5512 HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, OR BULLYING

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A. Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. The Board has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards; harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

For the purposes of this Policy, the term "parent," pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3, means the natural parent(s); adoptive parent(s); legal guardian(s); resource family parent(s); or surrogate parent(s) of a student. When parents are separated or divorced, "parent" means the person or agency which has legal custody of the student, as well as the natural or adoptive parent(s) of the student, provided parental rights have not been terminated by a court of appropriate jurisdiction.

B. Definition of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic;
2. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3;
3. Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
 - a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to their person or damage to their property; or



- b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students;
or
- c. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

The Board of Education recognizes that bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that may involve a real or perceived power imbalance. Recognizing "a real or perceived power imbalance" may assist school officials in identifying harassment, intimidation, or bullying within the context and relative positions of the alleged aggressor and target.

"Electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or remotely activating paging device in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3.

In accordance with the Board's Code of Student Conduct and this Policy, all acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that occur off school grounds, such as "cyber-bullying" (e.g., the use of electronic means to harass, intimidate, or bully) are addressed in this Policy.

C. Student Behavior

The Board of Education expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities and the care of school facilities and equipment, consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the parents and other community representatives, school administrators, school employees, school volunteers, and students of the school district, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

Students are expected to behave in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. The Board believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the Code of Student Conduct as opportunities for helping students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent student conduct problems and foster students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.



The Board expects students will act in accordance with the student behavioral expectations and standards regarding harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including:

1. Student responsibilities (e.g., requirements for students to conform to reasonable standards of socially accepted behavior; respect the person, property, and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to those who hold that authority);
2. Appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, and good citizenship;
3. Student rights; and
4. Sanctions and due process for violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(a) and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)1, the district has involved a broad-base of school and community members, including parents, school employees, volunteers, students, and community representatives, in the development of this Policy.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1, the Board developed guidelines for student conduct, taking into consideration the nature of the behavior; the nature of the student's disability, if any and to the extent relevant; the developmental ages of students; severity of the offenses and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors; and the mission and physical facilities of the individual school(s) in the district. This Policy requires all students in the district to adhere to the rules established by the school district and to submit to the remedial and consequential measures that are appropriately assigned for infractions of these rules.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1, the Superintendent shall annually provide to students and their parents the rules of the district regarding student conduct. Provisions shall be made for informing parents whose primary language is other than English.

The district prohibits active or passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school district will support students who:

1. Walk away from acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying when they see them;
2. Constructively attempt to stop acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;



3. Provide support to students who have been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and
4. Report acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying to the designated school staff member.

D. Consequences and Remedial Actions

The Board of Education requires its school administrators to implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for students who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, and the consequences and remedial responses for staff members who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

In every incident found to be harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the school Principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, may apply disciplinary consequences and/or remedial actions, such as the provision of counseling, behavioral interventions, or other measures.

Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offenses; consider the developmental ages of the student offenders; the nature of the student's disability, if any and to the extent relevant; and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors, per the Code of Student Conduct and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.

The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by the school administrators in the implementation of appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying by students.

Factors for Determining Consequences

- Age, disability (if any and to the extent relevant), developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved and their relationship to the school district;
- Degrees of harm;
- Surrounding circumstances;
- Nature and severity of the behaviors;
- Incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior;
- Relationships between the parties involved; and
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred.



Factors for Determining Remedial Measures

Personal:

- Life skill deficiencies;
- Social relationships;
- Strengths;
- Talents;
- Traits;
- Interests;
- Hobbies;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Classroom participation;
- Academic performance;
- Relationship to peers; and
- Relationship between student/family and the school district.

Environmental:

- School culture;
- School climate;
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student;
- General staff management of classrooms or other educational environments;
- Staff ability to prevent and manage difficult or inflammatory situations;
- Availability of programs to address student behavior;
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports;
- Social relationships;
- Community activities;
- Neighborhood situation; and
- Family situation.

Examples of Consequences and Remedial Measures

The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:



Examples of Consequences:

- Admonishment;
- Temporary removal from the classroom (any removal of .5 days or more must be reported in the Student Safety Data System);
- Deprivation of privileges;
- Classroom or administrative detention;
- Referral to disciplinarian;
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend;
- Out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term);
- Reports to law enforcement or other legal action;
- Expulsion; and
- Bans from receiving certain services, participating in school-district-sponsored programs or being in school buildings or on school grounds.

Examples of Remedial Measures

Personal:

- Restitution and restoration;
- Peer support group;
- Recommendations of a student behavior or ethics council;
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
- Supportive student interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Child Study Team, as appropriate;
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor);
- Involvement of school “disciplinarian;”
- Student counseling;
- Parent conferences;
- Alternative placements (e.g., alternative education programs);
- Student treatment; and
- Student therapy.



Environmental (Classroom, School Building, or School District):

- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to HIB;
- School culture change and school climate improvement;
- Adoption of research-based, systemic bullying prevention programs;
- School policy and procedures revisions;
- Modifications of schedules;
- Adjustments in hallway traffic;
- Modifications in student routes or patterns traveling to and from school;
- Supervision of student before and after school, including school transportation;
- Targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, locker room, playground, school perimeter, bus);
- Teacher aides;
- Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;
- General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- Professional development plans for involved staff;
- Disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem;
- Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
- Parent conferences;
- Family counseling;
- Involvement of parent-teacher organizations;
- Involvement of community-based organizations;
- Development of a general bullying response plan;
- Recommendations of a student behavior or ethics council;
- Peer support groups;
- Alternative placements (e.g., alternative education programs);
- School transfers; and
- Law enforcement (e.g., safe schools resource officer, juvenile officer) involvement or other legal action.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion of students, as set forth in the Board's approved Code of Student Conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1.



The Principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, shall develop an individual student intervention plan when a student is found to be an offender in three harassment, intimidation, or bullying incidents and each subsequent incident occurring within one school year. The student intervention plan may include disciplinary consequences and/or remedial actions and may require the student, accompanied by a parent, to satisfactorily complete a class or training program to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior. Each student intervention plan must be approved by the Superintendent.

While the majority of incidents may be addressed solely by school officials, the Superintendent or designee and the Principal shall report a harassment, intimidation, or bullying incident to law enforcement officials if the conduct rises to the level of a mandatory report as outlined in the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials.

Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions – Adults

The district will also impose appropriate consequences and remedial actions to an adult who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. The consequences may include, but not be limited to: verbal or written reprimand; increment withholding; legal action; disciplinary action; termination; and/or bans from providing services, participating in school district-sponsored programs, or being in school buildings or on school grounds. Remedial measures may include, but not be limited to: in or out-of-school counseling, professional development programs, and work environment modifications.

E. Reporting Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Education requires the Principal at each school to be responsible for receiving all complaints alleging harassment, intimidation, or bullying committed by an adult or youth against a student. All Board members, school employees, and volunteers and contracted service providers who have contact with students, are required to verbally report alleged acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying to the Principal or designee on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. All Board members, school employees, and contracted service providers who have contact with students, also shall submit a New Jersey Department of Education-approved HIB 338 Form to the Principal within two school days of the verbal report. Failure to make the required report(s) may result in disciplinary action. The HIB 338 Form shall be kept on file at the school, but shall not be included in any student record unless the incident results in disciplinary action or is otherwise required to be contained in a student's record under State or Federal Law.



The district may not fail to initiate an investigation of harassment, intimidation, or bullying solely because written documentation was not provided. Failing to conduct a harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation solely because a parent or student did not submit written documentation violates the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act and this Policy. If a parent makes a verbal allegation of harassment, intimidation, or bullying to a district staff member, but does not complete and submit the HIB 338 Form, the staff member or a designee must complete and submit the HIB 338 Form.

The Principal or designee is required to inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.7(a)2.viii.(2), when providing notification to the parents of all students involved, the Principal or designee shall take into account the circumstances of the incident when conveying the nature of the incident, including the actual or perceived category motivating the alleged offense. The Principal or designee shall keep a written record of the date, time, and manner of notification to the parents.

The Principal, upon receiving a verbal or written report, may take interim measures to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all parties pending the findings of the investigation.

Students, parents, and visitors are encouraged to report alleged acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying to the Principal or designee on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. The school district shall provide a person an online means to complete the HIB 338 Form to anonymously report an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Formal action for violations of the Code of Student Conduct may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

A Board member or school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this Policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The Principal shall promptly submit a copy of each completed HIB 338 Form to the Superintendent.

The district may consider every mechanism available to simplify reporting, including standard reporting forms and/or web-based reporting mechanisms. For anonymous reporting, in addition to making the HIB 338 Form available online, the district may consider locked boxes located in areas of a school where reports can be submitted without fear of being observed.



A school administrator who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or who determines a reported incident or complaint, assuming all facts presented are true, is a report within the scope of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, or who should have known of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action. The district also should consider procedures and disciplinary action when it is found that someone had information regarding a harassment, intimidation, or bullying incident, but did not make the required report(s).

F. Anti-Bullying Coordinator, Anti-Bullying Specialist, and School Safety/School Climate Team(s)

1. The Superintendent shall appoint a district Anti-Bullying Coordinator. The Superintendent shall make every effort to appoint an employee of the school district to this position.

The district Anti-Bullying Coordinator shall:

- a. Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school district's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
 - b. Collaborate with school Anti-Bullying Specialists in the district, the Board of Education, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the district;
 - c. Provide data, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
 - d. Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Superintendent; and
 - e. Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Specialist(s) to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the district.
2. The Principal in each school shall appoint a school Anti-Bullying Specialist. The Anti-Bullying Specialist shall be a guidance counselor, school psychologist, or other certified staff member trained to be the Anti-Bullying Specialist from the currently employed staff in the school.



The school Anti-Bullying Specialist shall:

- a. Chair the School Safety/School Climate Team as provided in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21;
 - b. Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school; and
 - c. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school.
3. A School Safety/School Climate Team shall be formed in each school in the district to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the on-going systemic operational procedures and educational practices in the school, and to address issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying that affect school climate and culture. Each School Safety/School Climate Team shall meet, at a minimum, two times per school year. The School Safety/School Climate Team shall consist of the Principal or the Principal's designee who, if possible, shall be a senior administrator in the school and the following appointees of the Principal: a teacher in the school; a school Anti-Bullying Specialist, a parent of a student in the school; and other members to be determined by the Principal. The school Anti-Bullying Specialist shall serve as the chair of the School Safety/School Climate Team.

The School Safety/School Climate Team shall:

- a. Receive records of all complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students that have been reported to the Principal;
- b. Receive copies of all reports prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
- c. Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the school;
- d. Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;



- e. Educate the community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- f. Participate in the training required pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq. and other training which the Principal or the district Anti-Bullying Coordinator may request. The School Safety/School Climate Team shall be provided professional development opportunities that may address effective practices of successful school climate programs or approaches; and
- g. Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying as requested by the Principal or district Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

Notwithstanding any provision of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21 to the contrary, a parent who is a member of the School Safety/School Climate Team shall not participate in the activities of the team set forth in 3. a., b., or c. above or any other activities of the team which may compromise the confidentiality of a student, consistent with, at a minimum, the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232 and 34 CFR Part 99), N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7, Student Records and N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.9, Student Records.

G. Investigating Allegations of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Education requires a thorough and complete investigation to be conducted for each report of an alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. All details of an alleged incident must be populated into the HIB 338 Form. However, completing the form shall not delay beginning the investigation in accordance with the law.

The HIB 338 Form shall be kept on file at the school and will only be added to a student record if the alleged incident is founded, disciplinary action is imposed or is otherwise required to be contained in a student's record under State or Federal law.

The investigation shall be initiated by the Principal or designee within one school day of the verbal report of the incident. The investigation shall be conducted by the school Anti-Bullying Specialist appointed by the Principal. The Principal may appoint



additional personnel who are not school Anti-Bullying Specialists to assist the school Anti-Bullying Specialist in the investigation. Investigations of complaints concerning adult conduct shall not be investigated by a member of the same bargaining unit as the individual who is the subject of the investigation. The Anti-Bullying Specialist may not participate in an investigation regarding their supervisor or staff at a higher administrative level.

The investigation shall be completed, and the written findings submitted to the Principal as soon as possible, but not later than ten school days from the date of the written report of the alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or from the date of the written notification from the Superintendent to the Principal to initiate an investigation. Should information regarding the reported incident and the investigation be received after the end of the ten-day period, the school Anti-Bullying Specialist or the Principal shall amend the original report of the results of the investigation to ensure there is an accurate and current record of the facts and activities concerning the reported incident.

The Principal shall proceed in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. The Principal shall submit the report to the Superintendent within two school days of the completion of the investigation and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.). As appropriate to the findings from the investigation, the Superintendent shall ensure the Code of Student Conduct has been implemented and provide intervention services; order counseling; establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying and enhance school climate; or take or recommend other appropriate action, including seeking further information as necessary.

The Superintendent shall report the results of each investigation to the Board no later than the date of the regularly scheduled Board meeting following the completion of the investigation. The Superintendent's report also shall include information on any consequences imposed under the Code of Student Conduct; intervention services provided; counseling ordered; training established; or other action taken or recommended by the Superintendent.

Parents of students who are parties to the investigation shall be provided with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the district found evidence of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. This information shall be provided in writing within five school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the Board. The district may not divulge personally identifying information or any information that could result in the identification of any student other than the child of the parents being notified.



A parent may request a hearing before the Board after receiving the information. Any request by the parents for a hearing before the Board concerning the written information about a harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15b(6)(d), must be filed with the Board Secretary no later than sixty calendar days after the written information is received by the parents. The hearing shall be held within ten business days of the request. Prior to the hearing, the Superintendent shall confidentially share a redacted copy of the HIB 338 Form that removes all student identification information with the Board. The Board shall conduct the hearing in executive session, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4.1 et seq.), to protect the confidentiality of the students. At the hearing, the Board may hear testimony from and consider information provided by the Anti-Bullying Specialist and others, as appropriate, regarding the alleged incident; the findings from the investigation of the alleged incident; recommendations for consequences or services; and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents, prior to rendering a determination.

At the regularly scheduled Board meeting following its receipt of the report or following a hearing in executive session, the Board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the Superintendent's decision. The Board's decision may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:3, no later than ninety days after the issuance of the Board's decision.

A school administrator who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or who determines a reported incident or complaint, assuming all facts presented are true, is a report within the scope of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, or who should have known of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Board also requires the thorough investigation of complaints or reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, occurring on district school buses, at district school-sponsored functions, and off school grounds involving a student who attends an approved private school for students with disabilities. The investigation will be conducted by the Board's Anti-Bullying Specialist in consultation with the approved private school for students with disabilities.



H. Responding to Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Education authorizes the Principal of each school to define the range of ways in which school staff will respond once an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is confirmed, and the Superintendent shall respond to confirmed harassment, intimidation, or bullying, according to the parameters described below and in this Policy. The Board recognizes that some acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individual(s) committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that they require a response either at the classroom, school building, or school district levels or by law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37, Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.3, Long-term suspensions, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.4, Expulsions.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual is appropriate, school officials shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act; the degree of harm; the nature and severity of the behavior; past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior; and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Institutional (i.e., classroom, school building, school district) responses can range from school and community surveys, to mailings, to focus groups, to adoption of research-based harassment, intimidation, or bullying prevention program models, to training for certificated and non-certificated staff, to participation of parents and other community members and organizations, to small or large group presentations for fully addressing the actions and the school's response to the actions, in the context of the acceptable student and staff member behavior and the consequences of such actions, and to the involvement of law enforcement officers, including safe schools resource officers.

This Policy and the Code of Student Conduct shall apply to instances when a school employee is made aware of alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurring off school grounds.

For every incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the school officials must respond appropriately to the individual who committed the act. The range of responses to confirmed harassment, intimidation, or bullying acts should include individual, classroom, school, or district responses, as appropriate to the findings from each incident. Examples of responses that apply to each of these categories are provided below:



1. Individual responses can include positive behavioral interventions (e.g., peer mentoring, short-term counseling, life skills groups) and punitive actions (e.g., detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expulsion, law enforcement report or other legal action).
2. Classroom responses can include class discussions about an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, role plays, research projects, observing and discussing audio-visual materials on these subjects, and skill-building lessons in courtesy, tolerance, assertiveness, and conflict management.
3. School responses can include theme days, learning station programs, parent programs, and information disseminated to students and parents, such as fact sheets or newsletters explaining acceptable uses of electronic and wireless communication devices or strategies for fostering expected student behavior.
4. District-wide responses can include community involvement in policy review and development; professional development programs; adoption of curricula and school-wide programs; coordination with community-based organizations (e.g., mental health, health services, health facilities, law enforcement officials, faith-based organizations); and disseminating information on the core ethical values adopted by the Board's Code of Student Conduct, per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)2.

In providing support for victims of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the district should identify a range of strategies and resources, which may include, but is not limited to, the following actions for individual victims:

- Counseling;
- Teacher Aides;
- Hallway and playground monitors;
- Schedule changes;
- Before and after school supervision;
- School transportation supervision;
- School transfers; and
- Therapy.

I. Reprisal or Retaliation

The Board of Education prohibits a Board member, school employee, contracted service provider who has contact with students, school volunteer, or student from engaging in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or any other person who has reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or who



reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, Federal and State statutes and regulations, and district policies and procedures.

J. False Accusations of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Education prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

1. Students - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student could range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.3, Long-term suspensions, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.4, Expulsions;
2. School Employees - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee or contracted service provider who has contact with students could entail discipline in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements; and
3. Visitors or Volunteers - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer could be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act, including law enforcement reports or other legal actions, removal of buildings or grounds privileges, or prohibiting contact with students or the provision of student services.

K. Additional Policy Requirements

The Board of Education requires the Superintendent to annually disseminate this Policy to all school employees, contracted service providers who have contact with students, school volunteers, students and parents who have children enrolled in a school in the school district, along with a statement explaining that this Policy applies to all acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions or on a school bus and, as appropriate, acts that occur off school grounds.



The Superintendent shall post a link to this Policy that is prominently displayed on the home page of the school district's website. The Superintendent shall ensure that notice of this Policy appears in the student handbook and all other publications of the school district that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards for schools within the school district.

The Superintendent shall post the name, school phone number, school address and school email address of the district Anti-Bullying Coordinator on the home page of the school district's website. Additionally, the Superintendent shall post the contact information for the School Climate State Coordinator on the school district home page alongside this Policy.

Each Principal or designee shall post the name, school phone number, school address, and school email address of both the school Anti-Bullying Specialist and the district Anti-Bullying Coordinator on the home page of each school's website.

The Superintendent shall post the New Jersey Department of Education's Guidance for Parents on the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act on the district homepage and on the homepage for each school in the district with a website.

The Superintendent and the Principals shall provide training on the school district's harassment, intimidation, or bullying policies to school employees contracted service providers and volunteers who have significant contact with students. The training shall include instruction on preventing bullying on the basis of the protected categories enumerated in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 and other distinguishing characteristics that may incite incidents of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school district's employee training program shall include information regarding the school district policy against harassment, intimidation, or bullying, which shall be provided to full-time and part-time staff, contracted service providers and school volunteers who have significant contact with students.

The Superintendent shall develop and implement a process for annually discussing the school district policy on harassment, intimidation, or bullying with students. The Superintendent and the Principal(s) shall annually conduct a re-evaluation, reassessment, and review of this Policy and any report(s) and/or finding(s) of the School Safety/School Climate Team, with input from the school Anti-Bullying Specialist, and recommend revisions and additions to this Policy as well as to harassment, intimidation, or bullying prevention programs and approaches based on the findings from the evaluation, reassessment, and review.



L. Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Training and Prevention Programs

Each public school teacher and educational services professional shall be required to complete at least two hours of instruction on harassment, intimidation, or bullying prevention within each five year professional development period as part of the professional development requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-22.d. The required two hours of suicide prevention instruction shall include information on the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and information on reducing the risk of suicide in students who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

Each newly elected or appointed Board member shall complete, during the first year of the member's first term, a training program on harassment, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33.

A school leader shall complete school leader training that shall include information on the prevention of harassment, intimidation, or bullying as required in N.J.S.A. 18A:26-8.2.

The school district shall annually observe a "Week of Respect" beginning with the first Monday in October. In order to recognize the importance of character education, the school district shall observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on the prevention of harassment, intimidation, or bullying as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14. Throughout the school year the district shall provide ongoing age-appropriate instruction on preventing harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-29.

The school district and each school in the district shall annually establish, implement, document, and assess harassment, intimidation, or bullying prevention programs or approaches, and other initiatives in consultation with school staff, students, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement, and community members. The programs or approaches and other initiatives shall be designed to create school-wide conditions to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17.

M. Reports to Board of Education and New Jersey Department of Education

The Superintendent shall report two times each school year, between September 1 and January 1 and between January 1 and June 30 at a public hearing all acts of violence,



vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying which occurred during the previous reporting period in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. The information shall also be reported to the New Jersey Department of Education in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46.

N. School and District Grading Requirements

Each school and each district shall receive a grade for the purpose of assessing their efforts to implement policies and programs consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq. The grade received by a school and the district shall be posted on the homepage of the school's website and the district's website in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. A link to the report that was submitted by the Superintendent to the Department of Education shall also be available on the school district's website. This information shall be posted on the websites within ten days of receipt of the grade for each school and the district.

O. Reports to Law Enforcement

The Superintendent or designee and the Principal shall consult law enforcement, as appropriate, pursuant to the provisions of the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (MOA), if the student's behavior may constitute a possible violation of the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice.

Law enforcement officials may request a suspension or stay of the district's harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation if the conduct is being investigated by law enforcement. If law enforcement officials request a suspension or stay of a harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation, school officials will follow the provisions of the MOA regardless of where the district is in the harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation timeline.

School officials will immediately memorialize the request, in writing, from law enforcement and advise the parent(s) of the alleged perpetrator(s) and alleged victim(s) of law enforcement's request. The notice to parents must include notice that the district is obligated under New Jersey's Law Against Discrimination to address student-on-student bias-based harassment and the statute of limitations for filing a complaint in the Division of Civil Rights will not be extended due to law enforcement's request.

If law enforcement has not affirmatively requested a stay or suspension of a harassment, intimidation, or bullying investigation, but the school district believes the action(s) involved may constitute a criminal offense(s), school officials will contact law enforcement to inquire as to whether law enforcement may want to investigate the matter.



POLICY

WINSLOW TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

Some acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be bias-related-acts and school officials must report to law enforcement officials any bias-related acts, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.3.(e), and pursuant to the provisions of the MOA.

P. Collective Bargaining Agreements and Individual Contracts

Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13.1 et seq. shall be construed as affecting the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act's effective date (January 5, 2011) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-30.

The Board of Education prohibits the employment of or contracting for school staff positions with individuals whose criminal history record check reveals a record of conviction for a crime of bias intimidation or conspiracy to commit or attempt to commit a crime of bias intimidation.

Q. Students with Disabilities

Nothing contained in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13.1 et seq. shall alter or reduce the rights of a student with a disability with regard to disciplinary actions or to general or special education services and supports pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-32.

The school district shall submit all subsequent amended Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Policies to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools within thirty days of Board adoption.

N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 through 18A:37-37

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 through 6A:16-7.9

Model Policy and Guidance for Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation,
and Bullying on School Property, at School-Sponsored Functions and
on School Buses – August 2022 – New Jersey Department of Education

A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education
and Law Enforcement Officials – 2023 Revisions

Adopted:



5533 STUDENT SMOKING

The Board of Education recognizes the use of tobacco presents a health hazard that can have serious implications both for the smoker and the nonsmoker and that smoking habits developed by young people may have lifelong harmful consequences.

For the purpose of this Policy, “smoking” means the burning of, inhaling from, exhaling the smoke from, or the possession of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other matter or substance which contains tobacco or any other matter that can be smoked, or the inhaling or exhaling of smoke or vapor from an electronic smoking device pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:3D-57. For the purpose of this Policy, “smoking” also includes the use of smokeless tobacco and snuff.

For the purpose of this Policy, “electronic smoking device” means an electronic device that can be used to deliver nicotine or other substances to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an electronic cigarette, cigar, cigarillo, pipe, or any cartridge or other component of the device or related product pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:170-51.4.

For the purpose of this Policy, “school buildings” and “school grounds” means and includes land, portions of land, structures, buildings, and vehicles, owned, operated or used for the provision of academic or extracurricular programs sponsored by the district or community provider and structures that support these buildings, such as school wastewater treatment facilities, generating facilities, and any other central facilities including, but not limited to, kitchens and maintenance shops. “School buildings” and “school grounds” also include athletic stadiums; swimming pools; any associated structures or related equipment tied to such facilities including, but not limited to, grandstands and night field lights; greenhouses; garages; facilities used for non-instructional or non-educational purposes; and any structure, building, or facility used solely for school administration. “School buildings” and “school grounds” also include other facilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:26-1.2; playgrounds; and other recreational places owned by local municipalities, private entities, or other individuals during those times when the school district has exclusive use of a portion of such land.

N.J.S.A. 2A:170-51.4 prohibits the sale or distribution to any person under twenty-one years old of any cigarettes made of tobacco or any other matter or substance which can be smoked, or any cigarette paper or tobacco in any form, including smokeless tobacco; and any electronic device that can be used to deliver nicotine or other substances to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an electronic cigarette, cigar, cigarillo, pipe, or any cartridge or other component of the device or related product. Consequences for a student possessing such an item will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.



POLICY

WINSLOW TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Student Smoking

The Board prohibits smoking by students at any time in school buildings or on school grounds, at school-sponsored events away from school, or on a school bus.

The Board also prohibits the possession of any item listed in N.J.S.A. 2A:170-51.4 at any time in school buildings or on school grounds, at school-sponsored events away from school, or on a school bus. Such items will be confiscated and may be returned to the parent, upon request.

If it appears to an educational staff member or other professional, upon confiscating such item(s), that the student may currently be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, the staff member shall inform the Principal or designee. The Principal, designee or School Nurse shall immediately notify the parent and the Superintendent or designee. The Principal or designee shall require an immediate medical examination of the student and shall comply with all of the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3, Regulation 5530, and this Policy.

In the event the Principal, designee or School Nurse after inspection of the confiscated item(s), has reason to believe the item(s) may have contained or may contain a controlled dangerous substance, a controlled substance analog, or other drugs pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:35-2, the Principal, designee or School Nurse shall immediately notify the parent and the Superintendent or designee. The Principal or designee shall require an immediate medical examination of the student and shall comply with all of the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3, Regulation 5530, and this Policy. Principals and designees shall be trained to identify controlled dangerous substances in electronic smoking devices.

When the Principal or designee has reasonable suspicion to believe a confiscated electronic smoking device is being used as a nexus for marijuana or other controlled dangerous substances or cannabis, the Principal or designee shall immediately notify the Superintendent or designee and law enforcement in accordance with the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials.

A sign indicating smoking is prohibited in school buildings and on school grounds will be posted at each public entrance of a school building in accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3D-61. The sign shall also indicate violators are subject to a fine.

A student who violates the provisions of this Policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the district's Student Discipline/Code of Conduct and may be subject to fines in accordance with law. In the event a student is found to have violated this Policy and the law, the Principal or designee may file a complaint with the appropriate Municipal Court or other agency with jurisdiction as defined in N.J.A.C. 8:6-9.1(c).



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Student Smoking

The Board directs that the health curriculum include instruction in the potential hazards of the use of tobacco. All school staff members shall make every reasonable effort to discourage students from developing the habit of smoking.

The Board will comply with any provisions of a municipal ordinance which provides restrictions on or prohibitions against smoking equivalent to, or greater than, those provided in N.J.S.A. 26:3D-55 through N.J.S.A. 26:3D-63.

N.J.S.A. 2A:170-51.4

N.J.S.A. 2C:35-2

N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-1

N.J.S.A. 26:3D-55 through 26:3D-63

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3

N.J.A.C. 8:6-7.2; 8:6-9.1 through 8:6-9.5

A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law
Enforcement Officials – 2023 Revisions

Adopted:



R 5533 STUDENT SMOKING

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining a smoke-free environment on school grounds, at events sponsored by the Board away from school, and on any transportation vehicle supplied by the Board. The school administration and all school staff members shall strictly enforce this smoking prohibition and will work together to ensure students do not smoke in violation of Board Policy 5533 and N.J.S.A. 26:3D-56.

A. Notice Provisions

1. A sign shall be posted in every school building indicating smoking is prohibited in any school building or on school grounds. The sign shall also indicate violators will be subject to a fine.
2. Each school's student handbook will indicate smoking is prohibited on school grounds, at events sponsored by the Board away from school, and on any transportation vehicle supplied by the Board.
3. A public address announcement will be made, when practicable, at school-sponsored events indicating smoking is prohibited in school buildings and on school grounds.

B. Reporting Procedures

1. Any teaching staff member who observes a student smoking in violation of Policy 5533 shall inform the student to cease smoking and report the violation to the Principal or designee.
2. Any support staff member who observes a student smoking in violation of Policy 5533 shall either inform a teaching staff member, who shall report the violation to the Principal or designee or the support staff member may report the violation directly to the Principal or designee.
3. The Principal or designee will investigate each report received from a staff member and make a determination whether the student has violated Board Policy 5533.
4. In the event there is reasonable suspicion to believe a confiscated electronic smoking device is being used as a nexus for marijuana or other controlled dangerous substances or cannabis, the Principal or designee shall notify law enforcement in accordance with the district's Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials and follow the procedure outlined in Regulation 5530.



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Student Smoking

C. Violation Consequences

1. In the event the Principal or designee determines a student has violated Policy 5533, the student will be assigned appropriate discipline in accordance with the district's Student Discipline/Code of Conduct.
2. The Principal or designee will notify the student's parent(s) when discipline is being imposed for a violation of Policy 5533.

Issued:



7441 ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS
AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Board of Education authorizes the use of electronic surveillance systems in school buildings and on school grounds to enhance the safety and security for school district staff, students, community members, and other building occupants and to protect the school district's buildings and grounds.

The content produced by the surveillance system under certain circumstances may be considered a student record and if so it will be subject to the Board policy and regulation regarding confidential student records. If the content of the surveillance system becomes the subject of a disciplinary proceeding, it shall be treated like other evidence in the proceeding.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9, if at least one school building of the school district is equipped with video surveillance equipment that is capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote location, the Board shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with local law enforcement authorities providing the authorities with the capacity to activate the equipment and view live streaming video during an emergency situation. The MOU shall include the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 and any additional information required by law enforcement officials. In the event the parties to the MOU are unable to reach an agreement regarding any provision required to be included in the MOU as per N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9a, the County Prosecutor shall make the final determination regarding that provision. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 shall be construed as to require the installation of video surveillance equipment capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote site from a school building that does not have the ability to have live streaming video.

The Board shall post signage in a prominent, public place in buildings and on school grounds where electronic surveillance equipment may be used.

In addition to posting, the district shall notify school staff members, parent(s), and students that electronic surveillance may be used in school buildings and on school grounds through publication in student and staff handbooks or any other effective means to publish the district's use of electronic surveillance equipment in school buildings and on school grounds.

N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9

A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education
and Law Enforcement Officials – 2023 Revisions

Adopted:



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Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings
and On School Grounds

M

R 7441 ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

In order to enhance a safe and secure environment, the Board authorizes electronic surveillance devices to be used in school district buildings and on school grounds.

A. Recording and Notice

1. Surveillance devices may include, but are not limited to, sound/video cameras, audio recording devices, and other appropriate devices.
2. Recordings may be used to monitor and observe the conduct of school district staff, students, community members, and other person(s) in school buildings or on school grounds.
3. Signage will be posted in a prominent public place in school buildings and on school grounds where electronic surveillance equipment may be used.

B. Student Records and Notice

School district personnel will comply with the provisions of applicable law regarding student record requirements including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Recordings considered for retention, as a part of a student's behavioral record, will be maintained in accordance with established student record procedures governing access, review, and release of student records.

C. Staff Records and Notice

1. Recordings considered for retention as part of the employee's personnel record will be maintained in accordance with established Board personnel policies, administrative regulations, applicable law, and any labor agreements governing access, review, and release of employee personnel records.
2. The district will provide notice to students, parent(s), and school staff members that surveillance devices may be used in school buildings and on school grounds.



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Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings
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D. Storage/Security

1. All recordings will be stored by the Superintendent or designee and secured to ensure confidentiality.
2. Recordings will be retained in accordance with the New Jersey Department of the Treasury – Records Management Services – Records Retention Schedules and will be erased or discarded, unless there is a legitimate reason for retaining such recording for review, upon receiving prior authorization from Records Management Services.

E. Use

1. The determination of the location of surveillance devices shall be made by the Superintendent or designee.
2. Tampering with or otherwise interfering with surveillance equipment is prohibited. Any individual found tampering with equipment shall be subject to discipline.

F. Viewing or Listening

1. Initial viewing or listening to recordings will be done by the Principal or designee.
2. Requests for viewing or listening will be limited to persons with a direct interest in any proceedings, disciplinary or otherwise, resulting from the recordings, as deemed appropriate by the Principal or designee.
3. Only the portion of the recording concerning a specific incident will be made available for viewing.
4. Viewing or listening to the recording will be permitted on school property or as otherwise required by law.
5. All viewing will be in the presence of the Principal or designee.



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Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings
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6. A written log will be maintained by the Principal or designee of those viewing video recordings including date of viewing, reason for viewing, the date the recording was made, and the signature of the viewer.
 7. Video recordings remain the property of the school district and may be reproduced only in accordance with law, including applicable district student records policy and procedures and district personnel records policy, procedures and applicable labor agreements.
- G. Law Enforcement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9)
1. In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9, if at least one school building of the school district is equipped with video surveillance equipment that is capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote location, the Board of Education shall enter into a MOU with local law enforcement authorities providing the authorities with the capacity to activate the equipment and view live streaming video during an emergency situation. The MOU shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:
 - a. A list of designated persons, including contact information, position, rank, and supervisor's contact information, of those who are authorized to activate the equipment to view the live streaming video. The list may be executed as a confidential attachment to the MOU; and
 - b. Description of the emergency circumstances under which the designated individuals could activate and view live streaming video.
 2. In the event the district and law enforcement authority are unable to reach an agreement regarding any provision required to be included pursuant to G.1.a.-c. above, the County Prosecutor shall make the final determination.
 3. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 shall be construed as to require the installation of video surveillance equipment capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote site from a school building that is not equipped with such equipment.



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Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings
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H. Purchase, Maintenance, Replacement of Equipment/Supplies

1. The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary or designee will be responsible for the purchase, maintenance, and replacement of all electronic surveillance devices.

Issued:



5111 ELIGIBILITY OF RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT STUDENTS

The Board of Education shall admit to its schools, free of charge, persons over five and under twenty years of age, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1, or such younger or older student as is otherwise entitled by law to a free public education.

Eligibility to Attend School – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.1, 3.2, and 3.3

The Board shall admit students eligible to attend school free of charge that are domiciled within the district as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.1 and Regulation 5111 – Section B.

The Board shall also admit any student that is kept in the home of a person other than the student's parent, and the person is domiciled in the school district and is supporting the student without remuneration as if the student were their own child in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2 and Regulation 5111 – Section C.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1.c., any person who fraudulently allows a child of another person to use their residence and is not the primary financial supporter of that child and any person who fraudulently claims to have given up custody of their child to a person in another district commits a disorderly persons offense.

A student is eligible to attend school in this school district free of charge pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1.d. if the student's parent temporarily resides within the school district and elects to have the student attend the school district of temporary residence, notwithstanding the existence of a domicile elsewhere pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.1(a)4. and Regulation 5111 – Section B.

A student is eligible to attend this school district free of charge in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2 and Regulation 5111 – Section C.

Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 or any other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, a student who moves out of the school district as a result of domestic violence, sexual abuse, or other family crises shall be permitted to remain enrolled in the school district for the remainder of the school year pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1.1 and in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(h) and Regulation 5111 – Section C.

Except as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.3(b), immigration/visa status shall not affect eligibility to attend school. Any student who is domiciled in the school district or otherwise eligible to attend school in the school district pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2 shall be enrolled without regard to, or inquiry concerning, immigration status. A student's immigration/visa status and their eligibility to attend school shall be in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.3(b) and Regulation 5111 – Section D.



Proof of Eligibility – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.4

The Board shall accept a combination of forms of documentation from persons attempting to demonstrate a student's eligibility for enrollment in the school district in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.4 and Regulation 5111 – Section E.

In the case of a dispute between the school district and the parent of a student in regard to the student's eligibility to enroll in the school district or to remain enrolled in the school district pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1, the school district may request from the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission the parent's name and address for use in verifying a student's eligibility for enrollment in the school district in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1.3.

Registration Forms and Procedures for Initial Assessment – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1

Registration and procedures for initial determinations of eligibility will be in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1 and Regulation 5111 – Section F.

Initial eligibility determinations shall be made upon presentation of an enrollment application, and enrollment shall take place immediately except in cases of clear, uncontested denials. Enrollment shall take place immediately when an applicant has provided incomplete, unclear, or questionable information, but the applicant shall be notified that the student will be removed from the school district if defects in the application are not corrected, or an appeal is not filed, in accordance with subsequent notice to be provided pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.2 and Regulation 5111 – Section F.

When a student appears ineligible based on the information provided in the initial application, the school district shall issue a preliminary written notice of ineligibility, including an explanation of the right to appeal to the Commissioner of Education in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1(c)2. and Regulation 5111 – Section F.

When enrollment is denied and no intent to appeal is indicated, applicants shall be advised they shall comply with compulsory education laws in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1(d) and Regulation 5111 – Section F.

Enrollment or attendance at the school shall not be conditioned or denied pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1(e) through (i) and Regulation 5111 – Section F.



Notices of Ineligibility – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.2

When a student is found ineligible to attend the school district pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22 or the student's initial application is found to be deficient upon subsequent review or investigation, the school district immediately shall provide to the applicant notice that is consistent with Commissioner-provided sample form(s) and meets requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.2 and Regulation 5111 – Section G.

Removal of Currently Enrolled Students – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.3

Nothing in N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4, this Policy, and Regulation 5111 shall preclude the Board from identifying through further investigation or periodic requests for revalidation of eligibility, students enrolled in the school district who may be ineligible for continued attendance due to error in initial assessment, changed circumstances, or newly discovered information pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.3 and Regulation 5111 – Section H.

When a student who is enrolled and attending school based on an initial eligibility determination is later determined to be ineligible for continued attendance, the Superintendent may apply to the Board for the student's removal in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.3 and Regulation 5111 – Section H.

Appeal to the Commissioner – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-5.1

An applicant may appeal to the Commissioner of Education the school district's determination that a student is ineligible to attend its schools in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-5.1 and Regulation 5111 – Section I.

Assessment and Calculation of Tuition – N.J.A.C. 6A:22-6

If no appeal to the Commissioner is filed by the parent, adult student, or district resident keeping an affidavit student following notice of an ineligibility determination, the Board may assess tuition for up to one year of a student's ineligible attendance, including the twenty-one day period provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 for appeal to the Commissioner in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-6.1 and Regulation 5111 – Section J. Tuition will be assessed and calculated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-6.3 and Regulation 5111 – Section J.

If an appeal to the Commissioner is filed by the parent, adult student, or district resident keeping an affidavit student and the petitioner does not sustain the burden of demonstrating the student's right to attend the school district, or the petitioner withdraws the appeal, fails to prosecute, or abandons the appeal by any means other than settlement agreeing to waive or reduce tuition, the Commissioner may assess tuition in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:22-6.2(a) and Regulation 5111 – Section J. Upon the Commissioner's finding that an appeal has been abandoned, the Board may remove the student from school and seek tuition in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:22-6.2(a)1. and Regulation 5111 – Section J.



Nonresident Students – N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3.a.

The Board shall receive the approval of the Executive County Superintendent (ECS) to establish a uniform tuition amount for any Board-approved nonresident student to be admitted to the school district. The continued enrollment of any nonresident student shall be contingent upon the student's maintenance of good standards of citizenship, discipline, attendance, and payment of tuition.

Children of Nonresident Staff Members

Any staff member who does not reside in this school district will not be permitted to enroll their children in the educational program of the school district.

Children of Nonresident Non-Teaching Staff Members

A non-teaching staff member who does not reside in this school district will not be permitted to enroll their children in the educational program of the school district.

Students Who Anticipate Moving to or from the District During the School Year

A nonresident student whose parent anticipates residency in this school district and has entered into a contract to buy, build, or rent a residence in this school district will, with Board approval, be enrolled with payment of a uniform tuition amount approved by the Executive County Superintendent for a period of time not greater than two weeks prior to the anticipated date of residency, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3.

A student who is in grade 12 and in their graduation year of the school and whose parent has moved away from the school district during the course of the school year will, with Board approval, be permitted to finish the school year in the school district with the payment of a uniform tuition amount as approved by the Executive County Superintendent, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3.



F-1 Visa Students

The school district is not required to, but may permit the attendance of F-1 Visa students into the school district only with the payment of full tuition and a signed tuition contract. The district may require advance payment of full tuition before providing the requested I-20 Form, in accordance with the provisions of Federal regulation 8 CFR 214.3. A F-1 Visa is granted to a foreign student through an application process that must include, but is not limited to, signed approval by the receiving school district exhibiting the receiving school district will accept the foreign student for enrollment and the foreign student's proof of financial means to pay the full tuition to the receiving school district for the academic year. The host family must be domiciled in the school district and shall submit a request to the Superintendent of Schools with supporting documentation as determined by the Superintendent or designee. A student with a F-1 Visa must be approved by the Board for attendance in the school district. The student's continued attendance in the school district shall be conditioned on a satisfactory attendance and disciplinary record.

J-1 Visa Students

The school district is not required to, but may permit the attendance of J-1 Visa students into the school district. The host family must be domiciled in the school district and shall submit a request to the Superintendent of Schools with supporting documentation as determined by the Superintendent or designee. A student with a J-1 Visa must be approved by the Board for attendance in the school district and shall not pay tuition. The student's continued attendance in the school district shall be conditioned on a satisfactory attendance and disciplinary record.

N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1; 18A:38-1.1; 18A:38-1.3; 18A:38-3;
18A:38-3.1; 18A:7B-12

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.3; 6A:17-2.1 et seq.; 6A:22-1.1 et seq.
8 CFR 214.3

Adopted:



8500 FOOD SERVICES

The Board of Education shall make school lunch available to all students enrolled in a school in the district unless less than five percent of enrolled students in the school are Federally eligible for a free or reduced price lunch in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4. School lunches made available pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 and this Policy shall meet minimum nutritional standards, established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDOA).

Free or reduced price breakfast and lunch, as required, shall be offered, under a school lunch program, school breakfast program, or a breakfast after the bell program, to all enrolled students who are determined to be Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals. As provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4.a.(3) and N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.a.(2), any student who is eligible for a reduced price lunch and breakfast, pursuant to Federal income eligibility standards and criteria, shall not be required to pay for such lunch or breakfast. Free lunch or breakfast shall also be offered to each enrolled student who is Federally ineligible for free or reduced price meals, but who has an annual household income that is not less than one hundred and eighty-six percent, and not more than one hundred and ninety-nine percent, of the Federal poverty level, as determined pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1.

A. Definitions – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-3.2

“Categorically eligible” means that a student is homeless, is a migrant child, is a runaway child, is a foster child, or is a Head Start child, as defined in 7 CFR Part 245, or is receiving assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or, to the extent that the USDOA authorizes the matching of Medicaid data to identify children who are eligible for free school meals, is a participant in the Medicaid program, and which student, by virtue of such status, is automatically eligible to be certified to receive free school meals under the National School Lunch Program or the Federal School Breakfast Program, without first submitting an application or being subject to the Federal income verification requirements established by 7 CFR Part 245.

“Eligible student” means a student who is categorically eligible or income-eligible for one or more subsidized school meals.

“Emergency meals distribution program” means a program, established under N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2, pursuant to which a school district is required to provide subsidized school meals to eligible students, through designated distribution sites, during any period in which a school in the district is subject to a public health-related closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



“Federal School Breakfast Program” means the Federal reimbursement program, established under the “Child Nutrition Act of 1966,” 42 USC s.1771 et seq., pursuant to which the USDOA is authorized to provide grants-in-aid and other assistance to the States, as may be necessary to help finance the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of school breakfast programs and facilitate the provision of free and reduced price breakfasts to eligible students.

“Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals” or “Federally eligible” means that a student is categorically eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program or for free breakfast under the Federal School Breakfast Program, or that the student satisfies Federal income eligibility requirements, adopted by the USDOA pursuant to 7 CFR Part 245, as is necessary to Federally qualify for and receive free or reduced price lunch under the National School Lunch Program or free or reduced price breakfast under the Federal School Breakfast Program.

“Federally ineligible for free or reduced price meals” or “Federally ineligible” means that a student is not categorically eligible for, and fails to satisfy Federal income eligibility requirements, adopted by the USDOA pursuant to 7 CFR Part 245, as is necessary for the student to Federally qualify for and receive free or reduced price lunch under the National School Lunch Program or free or reduced price breakfast under the Federal School Breakfast Program.

“Income-eligible” means that a student either satisfies Federal income eligibility requirements, adopted by the USDOA pursuant to 7 CFR Part 245, or satisfies State-level income eligibility requirements, set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4.a. or N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14.a.a., as is necessary for the student to qualify for and receive subsidized lunch under the National School Lunch Program or subsidized breakfast under the Federal School Breakfast Program, on the basis of income.

“Low-income family” means a family with an annual household income amounting to not more than one hundred and eighty-five percent of the Federal poverty level.

“Middle-income family” means a family with an annual household income amounting to not less than one hundred and eighty-six percent, and not more than two hundred and twenty-four percent, of the Federal poverty level.

“National School Lunch Program” means the Federal reimbursement program established under the “Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act,” 42 USC 1751 et seq., pursuant to which the USDOA is authorized to provide grants-in-aid and other assistance to the States, as may be necessary to help finance the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of school lunch programs and facilitate the provision of free and reduced price lunches to eligible students.



“Participating school” means a public or nonpublic school that provides daily lunch to enrolled students, through a school lunch program operated pursuant to the National School Lunch Program, or that provides daily breakfast to enrolled students, through a school breakfast program or breakfast after the bell program operated pursuant to the Federal School Breakfast Program, or both.

“Participating school district or nonpublic school” means a public school district or a nonpublic school that is required, or elects, to participate in the National School Lunch Program, the Federal School Breakfast Program, or both, as the case may be.

“School breakfast program” means a program that is established and operated by a public or nonpublic school, in accordance with the requirements of the Federal School Breakfast Program and, in the case of a public school, in accordance with a plan adopted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10 or N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10.1, and pursuant to which the school offers daily breakfasts to all enrolled students.

“School lunch program” means a program that is established and operated by a school district, or by a nonpublic school, in accordance with the requirements of the National School Lunch Program and the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4, and pursuant to which the district or nonpublic school offers daily lunches to all students enrolled therein.

“Student” means a child eighteen years of age or younger who is enrolled at a school in the State.

“Subsidized school breakfast” or “subsidized breakfast” means a school breakfast that is offered to an eligible student, free of charge, and the costs of which are reimbursed by the State or Federal government, as provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.a. and b.

“Subsidized school lunch” or “subsidized lunch” means a school lunch that is offered to an eligible student, free of charge, and the cost of which is reimbursed by the State or Federal government, as provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.a. and b.

“Subsidized school meals” or “subsidized meals” includes both subsidized school breakfasts and subsidized school lunches.

“Subsidized school meals application” means an application that identifies a student’s annual household income and is completed by the student’s parent, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1, N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21.c., or applicable Federal law, and which may be used by a school district, or by a public school or nonpublic school, both for the purposes of determining whether a student is income-eligible for subsidized school meals and for the other limited purposes specified in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1.c.



“Subsidized school meals certification process” or “subsidized meals certification” means the process pursuant to which a school or school district obtains and reviews a student’s subsidized school meals application, or engages in the review of other relevant documentation and materials pertaining to the student, as necessary to determine whether the student is categorically eligible or income-eligible for subsidized school meals under the National School Lunch Program, or under the Federal School Breakfast Program, or both.

“Summer Food Service Program” means the Federal reimbursement program, established under 42 USC 1761 and 7 CFR Part 225, pursuant to which the USDOA is authorized to provide grants-in-aid and other assistance to the States, as may be necessary to help schools, local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, and summer camps to finance the administrative and operational costs of providing meals to children, in low-income areas, during the summer months and other planned periods of school closure.

“Summer meals program” means the Summer Food Service Program, the Seamless Summer Option authorized by 42 USC 1761, or any other similar State or Federal program that is designed to ensure that children have access to nutritious meals during the summer months and other planned periods of school closure.

“Unsubsidized school breakfast” or “unsubsidized breakfast” means a school breakfast that is offered, upon the payment of a fee, to a student who is neither categorically eligible nor income-eligible for subsidized breakfast, regardless of whether such student remains income-eligible for subsidized school lunch under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4, and the cost of which breakfast is not reimbursable by the State or Federal government.

“Unsubsidized school lunch” or “unsubsidized lunch” means a school lunch that is offered, upon the payment of a fee, to a student who is not categorically eligible or income-eligible for subsidized lunch, and the cost of which is not reimbursable by the State or Federal government.

- B. Breakfast Program – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10; 18A:33-10.1; 18A:33-11; 18A:33-11.1; 18A:33-11.3; 18A:33-14a.

If twenty percent or more of the students enrolled in a school in the district on October 1 of the preceding school year were Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program or the Federal School Breakfast Program, the district shall establish a school breakfast program in the school in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10.



Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10 to the contrary, if ten percent or more of the students enrolled in a school in the district on October 1 of the preceding school year were Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program or the Federal School Breakfast Program the district shall establish a breakfast program in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10.1.

If seventy percent or more of the students enrolled in a school in the district on or before the last school day before October 16 of the preceding school year were Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program or the Federal School Breakfast Program, the district shall establish a breakfast after the bell program pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11.3.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11, in implementing a school lunch program, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 et seq., a school breakfast program, pursuant N.J.S.A. 18A:33-9 et seq., or N.J.S.A. 18A:33-10.1, or a breakfast after the bell program, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11.1 or N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11.3, each school and the district shall:

1. Publicize, to parents and students, the availability of the respective school meals program, as well as the various ways in which a student may qualify to receive subsidized school meals under the program, as provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 and N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.;
2. Make every effort to ensure that students receiving subsidized school meals are not identified, by the student body, faculty, or staff, in a manner that is distinct from the manner in which students receiving unsubsidized school meals are identified as program participants. Such efforts shall include, but need not be limited to, the establishment of a neutral meal plan or voucher system that does not make a distinction between these two groups of students; and
3. To the greatest extent practicable:
 - a. Facilitate and expedite the prompt and accurate identification of categorically eligible students who may be certified to receive subsidized school meals without first submitting an application therefor, and, whenever an application is required to establish income eligibility for subsidized meals, encourage students and their families to submit a subsidized school meals application for that purpose;
 - b. Facilitate and expedite the subsidized school meals application and income eligibility determination processes that are used, by the school or school district, to certify a student for subsidized school meals on the basis of income, and assist parents in completing the subsidized school meals application; and



- c. Encourage students who are neither categorically eligible nor income-eligible for subsidized school lunch or subsidized school breakfast to nonetheless participate in the school lunch program or school breakfast program, or both, as appropriate, on a paid and unsubsidized basis.

If the district participates in the Federal School Breakfast Program, the district is encouraged to increase the number of students participating in the program by establishing a breakfast after the bell program that incorporates school breakfast into the first-period classroom or the first few minutes of the school day pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11.1.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a., school breakfasts made available to students under a school breakfast program or a breakfast after the bell program shall meet minimum nutritional standards, established by the USDOA.

The State of New Jersey shall provide funding to each school in the district if the school operates a School Breakfast Program or a breakfast after the bell program, as may be necessary to reimburse the costs associated with the school's provision of free breakfasts, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.b., to students who are Federally ineligible for free or reduced price meals.

- C. Summer Food Service Program – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-23; 18A:33-24; 18A:33-25; 18A:33-26

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:33-24, if fifty percent or more of the students enrolled in the school district on or before the last school day before October 16 of the preceding school year were Federally eligible for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program or the Federal School Breakfast Program, the district shall become a sponsor or site under the Federal Summer Food Service Program or apply for a waiver pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-26.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:33-23, the district shall notify each student enrolled in the school district and the student's parent of the availability of, and criteria of eligibility for, the summer meals program and the locations in the district where the summer meals are available. The district shall provide this notification by distributing flyers provided by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDOA) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-23.c. The district may also provide electronic notice of the information through the usual means by which the district communicates with parents and students electronically.



Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-26.a., the NJDOA may grant a waiver of the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-24 et seq. To be granted a waiver, the district must show that it lacks the staff, facilities, or equipment to sponsor the Federal Summer Food Service Program, or the means to finance the hiring or acquisition of such staff, facilities, or equipment. The NJDOA also may grant a waiver for one year to the district if a different sponsor currently runs the Federal Summer Food Service Program within the district's community.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-26.b., when requesting a waiver pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-26.a., the district shall report to the NJDOA, in the manner prescribed by the NJDOA, its reasons for requesting a waiver of the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-24. The report shall include, but need not be limited to, a description of the specific impediments to implementing the program and actions that could be taken to remove those impediments or, where applicable, the identification of the sponsor that currently runs the program within the same community.

D. Information Provided to Parents Regarding the National School Lunch Program and the Federal School Breakfast Program – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1

1. At the beginning of each school year, or upon initial enrollment in the case of a student who enrolls during the school year, the participating school district shall provide each student's parent with:
 - a. A hard copy of information on the National School Lunch Program and the Federal School Breakfast Program, including, but not limited to:
 - (1) Information on the ability of all categorically eligible and income-eligible students to receive free school lunch under the National School Lunch Program, as provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4.a., and free school breakfast under the Federal School Breakfast Program, as provided by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.a.;
 - (2) Information on the subsidized school meals application and certification processes that are used to determine whether a student is categorically eligible or income-eligible for subsidized school meals;



- b. Determine whether the school or school district is required, by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-11.3 or by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-24, to establish a breakfast after the bell program or to participate as a sponsor or site in the Federal Summer Meals Service Program;
 - c. Ensure that the school receives appropriate reimbursement, from the State and Federal governments, for subsidized school meals served to eligible students, free of charge, through a school lunch program, a school breakfast program, a breakfast after the bell program, a summer meals program, or an emergency meals distribution program; and
 - d. Facilitate school aid determinations under the “School Funding Reform Act of 2008,” N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-43 et seq.
4. The school district shall require the parent to either submit an application to apply for the school lunch and school breakfast programs or submit a signed card provided by the school district indicating that the parent has received the application and information and is not interested in participating in the school lunch and school breakfast programs. The card shall include a notice stating that a parent may submit an application to apply for the school lunch and school breakfast programs at any time during the school year.
- If a school district does not receive an application or a signed card from the parent, the school district shall make at least one attempt to contact the student’s parent and request that the parent submit either an application or signed card.
5. The provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1 shall not apply in the case of a school which participates in the Community Eligibility Provision.
- E. Free or Reduced Price Meals’ Application Process – 7 CFR 245

School meals applications shall be reviewed in a timely manner. An eligibility determination will be made, the family will be notified of its status, and the status will be implemented as soon as possible within ten operating days of receipt of the completed application pursuant to 7 CFR 245.6(c)(6). “Operating days” mean days that reimbursable meals are offered to eligible students under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. Any student found eligible shall be offered free or reduced price meals or free milk immediately upon the establishment of their eligibility and shall continue to receive such meals during the pendency of any inquiry regarding their eligibility in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, NJDOA. Carry-over of previous year’s eligibility for students shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, NJDOA.



In accordance with 7 CFR 245.6(c)(1) and (2), eligibility for free or reduced price meals, as determined through an approved application or by direct certification, must remain in effect for the entire school year and for up to thirty operating days in the subsequent school year. Prior to the processing of an application or the completion of direct certification procedures for the current school year, children from households with approved applications or documentation of direct certification on file from the preceding year, shall be offered reimbursable free and reduced price meals, as appropriate.

In accordance with 7 CFR 245.6(c)(6)(iii), children from households that notify the local educational agency that they do not want free or reduced price benefits must have their benefits discontinued as soon as possible.

Pursuant to 7 CFR 245.6(c)(7), if the district receives an incomplete school meals application or a school meals application that does not meet the eligibility criteria for free or reduced priced benefits, the school meals application must be denied. The district shall document and retain the denied school meals application and reasons for ineligibility for three years in accordance with 7 CFR 245.6(e).

In accordance with 7 CFR 245.6(c)(7), parents of students who are denied benefits must receive prompt, written notification of their denial. The notification may be provided by mail or e-mail to the individual who signed the school meals application. Posting the denial on the “notification” page of an online system does not meet this requirement. Likewise, informing the parent of denial via telephone does not meet this requirement. If the district uses an automated telephone information system to notify parents of denied benefits, the district must also provide the parents with written notification of the denial. The notification must provide the: reason for denial of benefits; right to appeal; instructions on how to appeal; and ability to reapply for free and reduced price benefits at any time during the school year.

In accordance with 7 CFR 245.6(e), the district shall record the eligibility determination and notification in an easily referenced format. The record shall include the: denial date; reason for denial; date the denial notice was sent; and signature or initials of the determining official (may be electronic, where applicable).

Any parents of students who have benefits that are to be reduced or terminated must be given ten calendar days’ written notice of the change prior to the date the change will go into effect pursuant to 7 CFR 245.6a(j). The first day of the advance notice period shall be the day the notice is sent. The notice of adverse action may be sent via mail or to the e-mail address of the parent. The district cannot notify the household of adverse action by phone only.



Pursuant to 7 CFR 245.6a(j), the notice of adverse action must advise the parents of: change in benefits; reasons for the change; an appeal must be filed within the ten calendar days advance notice period to ensure continued benefits while awaiting a hearing and decision; instructions on how to appeal; and the parents may reapply for benefits at any time during the school year.

If the district participates in any National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, or provides free milk under the Special Milk Program, the district shall submit to the NJDOA a free and reduced price policy statement pursuant to 7 CFR 245.10.

In accordance with 7 CFR 245.1(b), the district shall avoid any policy or practice leading to the overt identification of students receiving free or reduced price meal benefits. Overt identification is any action that may result in a child being recognized as potentially eligible for or certified for free or reduced price school meals. Unauthorized disclosure or overt identification of students receiving free and reduced price meal benefits is prohibited. The district shall ensure that a child's eligibility status is not disclosed at any point in the process of providing free and reduced price meals, including: notification of the availability of free and reduced price benefits; certification and notification of eligibility; provision of meals in the cafeteria; and the point of service. In addition, the district shall ensure students who receive free and reduced price benefits are not overtly identified when they are provided additional services under programs or activities available to low-income students based on their eligibility for free and reduced price meals.

Pursuant to 7 CFR 245.2, disclosure means revealing or using individual student's program eligibility information obtained through the free and reduced price meal or free milk eligibility process for a purpose other than the purpose for which the information was obtained. Disclosure includes, but is not limited to, access, release, or transfer of personal data about students by means of print, tape, microfilm, microfiche, electronic communication, or any other means. It includes eligibility information obtained through the school meals application or through direct certification.

If the district accepts both cash and electronic payments, the district shall ensure students are not overtly identified through the method of payment pursuant to 7 CFR 245.8(b). To the maximum extent practicable, the district must ensure the sale of non-program foods and the method of payment for non-program foods do not inadvertently result in students being identified by their peers as receiving free and reduced price benefits.

The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary or designee will verify applications of those eligible for free or reduced price meals in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Food and Nutrition, School Nutrition Programs, NJDOA.



F. Meal Charge Program – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21

The Board of Education provides a meal charge program to permit students in the district to charge for breakfast or lunch. Collection of any payment for a meal charge program account that is in arrears shall be addressed in accordance with provisions of this Policy.

The Board of Education recognizes a student may not have breakfast or lunch (meal), as applicable, or money to purchase an unsubsidized school breakfast or school lunch at school on a school day causing the student's unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch bill to fall into arrears. The participating school district shall contact the student's parent to provide notice of the arrearage and shall provide the parent with a period of ten school days to pay the amount due. If the student's parent has not made full payment by the end of the designated ten school day period, then the participating school district shall again contact the student's parent to provide notice of any action to be taken in response to the arrearage.

A parent who has received a second notice their student's unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch bill is in arrears and who has not made payment in full within one week from the date of the second notice may be requested to meet with the Principal or designee to discuss and resolve the matter.

A parent's refusal to meet with the Principal or designee or take other steps to resolve the matter may be indicative of more serious issues in the family or household. However, when a parent's routine failure to provide breakfast or lunch is reasonably suspected to be indicative of child 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.

A participating school district shall report at least biannually to the NJDOA the number and percentage of enrolled students who have been denied school breakfast or school lunch on the basis of an unsubsidized meal bill arrearage, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21.a.(2) and this Policy.



Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 or this Policy shall be construed to:

1. Require the participating school district to deny or restrict the ability of a student to access unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch, respectively, whenever the student's unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch bill is in arrears; or
2. Authorize the participating school district to deny or restrict the ability of a student who is income-eligible for subsidized school lunch, but who is not income-eligible for subsidized school breakfast, to continue to access subsidized school lunch whenever the student's unsubsidized school breakfast bill is in arrears.

The participating school district shall not:

1. Publicly identify or stigmatize a student who cannot pay for an unsubsidized school breakfast or an unsubsidized school lunch or whose unsubsidized school breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears, for example, by requiring the student to sit at a separate table, to wear a wristband, hand stamp, or identifying mark, or to accept an alternative meal;
2. Require a student, who cannot pay for an unsubsidized school breakfast or an unsubsidized school lunch or whose unsubsidized school breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears to do chores or other work to pay for the unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch;
3. Require a student to discard an unsubsidized school breakfast or an unsubsidized school lunch after it has been served, either because the student is unable to pay for the unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch or because the student's unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized lunch bill is in arrears;
4. Prohibit a student, or a sibling thereof, from attending or participating in non-fee-based extracurricular activities, field trips, or school events, from receiving grades, official transcripts, or report cards, or from graduating or attending graduation events, solely because of the student's unresolved breakfast or lunch debt; or
5. Require a student's parent to pay fees or costs in excess of the actual amounts owed for unsubsidized school breakfasts or unsubsidized school lunches, or both, which have been previously served to the student.



If a student owes money for the equivalent of five or more unsubsidized school meals, the Principal or designee of the participating school district shall:

1. Determine whether the student is eligible for subsidized school meals, by conducting a review of all available records related to the student, and by making at least two attempts, not including the initial attempt made pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21b1, to contact the student's parent and have the parent complete a subsidized school meals application; and
2. Contact the student's parent to:
 - a. Offer assistance with respect to the completion of the subsidized school meals application; and
 - b. Determine whether there are other issues in the household that have caused the student to have insufficient funds to purchase an unsubsidized school breakfast or unsubsidized school lunch, as the case may be; and
 - c. Offer any other appropriate assistance.

The participating school district shall direct communications about a student's unsubsidized school meals arrearage to the parent and not to the student. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 shall prohibit the participating school district from sending a student home with a letter addressed to a parent.

Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 and the provisions of any other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, a student shall not be denied access to a school meal, regardless of the student's ability to pay or the status of the student's meal arrearages, during any period of time in which the participating school district is making a determination, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21.c., as to whether the student is eligible for, and can be certified to receive, subsidized school meals.

If the student's meal bill is in arrears, but the student has the money to purchase a meal on a subsequent school day, the student will be provided a meal with payment and the food service program will not use the student's payment to repay previously unpaid charges if the student intended to use the money to purchase that school day's meal.

Students receiving free meals will not be denied a meal even if they accrued a negative balance from other purchases in the cafeteria.



The school district may post this Policy on the school district's website provided there is a method in place to ensure this Policy reaches all households without access to a computer or the Internet.]

G. Provision of Meals to Homeless Children – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21c.

The district's liaison for the education of homeless children shall coordinate with district personnel to ensure that a homeless student receives free school meals and is monitored according to district policies pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21c.

H. Provision of School Meals During Period of School Closure – N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2

Whenever the Board receives a written directive, from either the New Jersey Department of Health or the health officer of the jurisdiction, instituting a public health-related school closure due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the district having jurisdiction over the closed school shall implement and operate an emergency school meals distribution program during the period of the school closure. An emergency school meals distribution program implemented pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2 shall provide for subsidized school meals to be made available, at meal distribution sites designated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2.b., to all students enrolled in the district who are either categorically eligible or income-eligible therefor.

In order to facilitate the emergency distribution of subsidized school meals in the event of an emergency public school closure, as described in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2.a., each district shall identify one or more school meal distribution sites that are walkable and easily accessible to students in the district. The district shall collaborate with county and municipal government officials in identifying appropriate distribution sites including, but not limited to: faith-based locations; community centers, such as YMCAs; and locations in the district where meals are made available through a summer meals program. In a district that includes high density housing, the district shall make every effort to identify an emergency school meals distribution site in that housing area.

The district shall identify students enrolled in the district who are categorically eligible or income-eligible for subsidized school lunch, subsidized school breakfast, or both, and for whom an emergency school meal distribution site, identified pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2.b., is not within walking distance. In the case of these students, the district shall distribute the subsidized school meals to the student's residence or to the student's bus stop along an established bus route, provided that, in the latter case, the student or the student's parent shall be present at the bus stop to accept the distribution. Distributions made pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2.c. may include up to a total of three school days' worth of food per delivery.



The district may use school buses owned and operated by the district to distribute subsidized school meals pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2. If the district does not own and operate its own buses, the district may enter into a contract authorizing another party to engage in the emergency distribution of subsidized school meals, on the district's behalf, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2, and any such contracts shall be exempt from the public bidding requirements established pursuant to the "Public School Contracts Law," N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.

The district shall collaborate, as feasible, with other districts and with local government units when implementing an emergency meals distribution program, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2, in order to promote administrative and operational efficiencies and cost savings.

School lunches and breakfasts that are made available through an emergency meals distribution program operating pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-27.2, shall be provided to eligible students free of charge, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4.a. and N.J.S.A. 18A:33-14a.a.

I. Statement of Compliance

All food service programs shall be operated pursuant to 7 CFR 245, as appropriate, and this Policy.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-42.1; 18A:33-4; 18A:33-5; 18A:33-10;
18A:33-10.1; 18A:33-11; 18A:33-11.1; 18A:33-11.2;
18A:33-11.3; 18A:33-14a.; 18A:33-21; 18A:33-21a.;
18A:33-21b1; 18A:33-21c.; 18A:33-23; 18A:33-24;
18A:33-25; 18A:33-26; 18A:33-27.2; 18A:58-7.1;
18A:58-7.2

N.J.A.C. 2:36

N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.6 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 8:24-2.1 through 7.5

7 CFR 210.1 et seq.

Adopted:

