

Change to State Law Will Impact all Dallas Students: Act 55 revised Section 1337 related to the school lunch program

As you may be aware, Act 55 of 2017, a new law making significant changes to PA School Code, was enacted in November.

Among the various revisions, the law prohibits schools from denying a school food program meal to any student who requests one but does not have the money to pay for one.

Based on this change schools may only withhold a school lunch from a student if they receive written direction from a parent or guardian. All students will be provided a school meal regardless of the amount of money owed on the lunch account, per the new law.

Under the new law:

1. Once a student owes money for five or more school meals, the school must make at least two attempts to reach the student's parent or guardian. DSD will make that contact via phone calls and letters mailed to the home.
2. **Communication regarding money owed by a student for school meals must be made to the student's parent or guardian. Students may not be communicated with or reminded related to overdue lunch balances as prohibited by this new law.**
3. Students who cannot pay for a school meal may not be publicly identified, required to perform tasks in return for a school meal, and may not be required to discard a school meal once served regardless of the student's ability to pay for it per the new law.
4. The new law applies to both the breakfast and lunch program.

As stated above, the school cannot communicate with students related to their lunch account balances per the new law. This may change communication practices between students and parents related to school lunch accounts.

In order to assist in allowing parents and families review lunch accounts and activity, an account tracking software, 'My School Bucks' has been and continues to be available to all district parents and family. To learn more about My School Bucks visit the link below:

<https://www.myschoolbucks.com/ver2/login/getmain?requestAction=home>

Please contact your child's principal with questions regarding Act 55 and the implications for the student lunch program.

Thank you.