

Act 55 of 2017 – Legislation to Prevent Lunch Shaming

Act 55 of 2017 is a new law making significant changes to the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

Act 55 of 2017 is designed to help protect our students from embarrassment and public stigma if their lunch account becomes negative. The new law prohibits school districts from denying a meal to students who don't have the money to pay for it. The main provisions of Act 55 of 2017 are:

- Communication regarding money owed by a student for school meals must be made to the student's parent or guardian and not to the student
- A student who cannot pay for a school meal or owes money on their account for a school meal may not be publically identified or stigmatized.
- A student who cannot pay for a school meal may not be required to perform chores or other work to pay for the school meal.

School districts are not permitted to tell students when they have a low or negative account balance. However, students may ask cashiers for their account balance. All school district correspondence regarding account balances is to be communicated directly to the student's parent or guardian through email, letter, text or phone call from the food service department.

If your student has a negative account balance, please note:

1. Only complete school program meals can be provided. If a student has not taken all the components to make a complete school program meal, the cashiers will instruct the student as to which additional food items are required to make their meal complete. (This is usually a fruit or vegetable component)
2. Students will not be permitted to charge a la carte items such as snacks, ice cream, chips, or extra entrees.

In an effort to assist in managing your student's meal account, you will receive an alert email weekly when your student's account balance is low or negative. If you do not have an email on file, you will receive a postal letter.

If you believe you are eligible for free or reduced price lunches, please apply online at www.ezmealapp.com.

Account balance information is also available at any time using the EZ School Pay website, at www.ezschoollpay.com. You can register to view your student's meal transactions, and set up alerts to notify you when your student's account balance becomes low. You can also make online payments.

If you do not wish for your student to purchase meals on account, please send a letter in writing stating this to Kevin Oswald, Food Service Director, at oswald_k@lasd.us.

We appreciate your participation in our program and look forward to serving your student. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Kevin Oswald
Food Service Director