

ASSEMBLY, No. 5164

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 6, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman CRAIG J. COUGHLIN

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

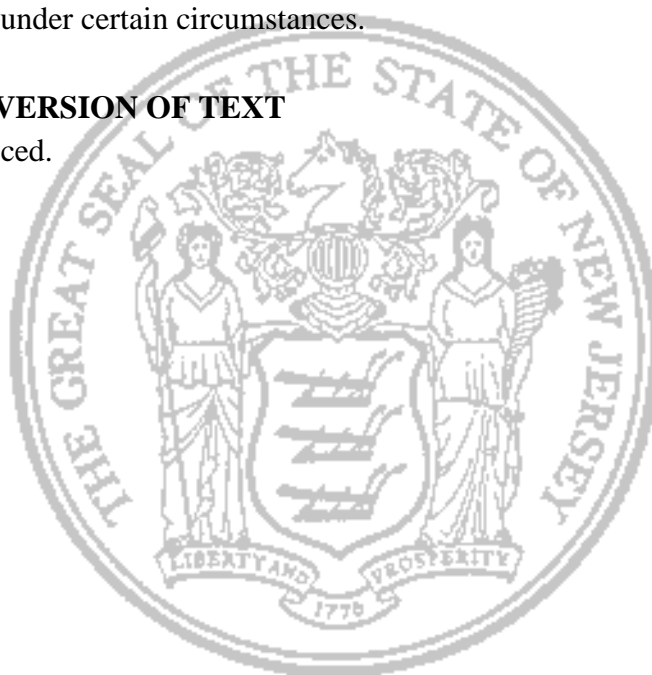
Assemblymen Atkins, Freiman and Assemblywoman Mosquera

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain school meal information be provided to public school students' parents and requires school districts to request that families apply for school meals under certain circumstances.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/21/2023)

1 AN ACT concerning school meals and amending P.L.2022, c.104.

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3 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
4 *of New Jersey:*

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6 1. Section 16 of P.L.2022, c.104 (C.18A:33-21b1) is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 16. a. At the beginning of each school year, or upon initial
9 enrollment, in the case of a student who enrolls during the school
10 year, a school district shall provide each student's parent or
11 guardian with:

12 (1) a hard copy of information on the National School Lunch
13 Program and the federal School Breakfast Program, including, but
14 not limited to, information on the availability of free or reduced
15 price meals for eligible students, information on the application and
16 determination processes that are used to certify eligible students for
17 subsidized school meals, and information on the rights that are
18 available to students and their families under this section and
19 section 1 of P.L.2015, c.15 (C.18A:33-21); and

20 (2) a hard copy of a school meals application form, as well as
21 instructions for completing the application, and, as necessary,
22 assistance in completing the application.

23 b. The school meals information and application provided to
24 parents and guardians, pursuant to subsection a. of this section,
25 shall:

26 (1) be communicated in a language that the parent or guardian
27 understands;

28 (2) specify the limited purposes for which collected personal data
29 may be used, as provided by subsection c. of this section; **[and]**

30 (3) **[be submitted to the parent or guardian either in writing or**
31 **electronically. In the latter case, the school district shall use the**
32 **usual means by which it communicates with parents and guardians**
33 **electronically]** (Deleted by amendment, P.L. , c.) (pending
34 before the Legislature as this bill); and

35 (4) include a notice that an application to apply for the school
36 lunch and school breakfast programs may be submitted at any time
37 during the school year and is required to be submitted annually.

38 The school district may also provide the information and
39 application electronically, through the usual means by which the
40 district electronically communicates with parents.

41 c. A school meals application that is completed by a parent or
42 guardian shall be confidential, and shall not be used or shared by
43 the student's school or school district, except as may be necessary
44 to:

45 (1) determine whether a student identified in the application is
46 eligible for free or reduced price school meals;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

(2) determine whether the school or school district is required, by section 2 of P.L.2018, c.25 (C.18A:33-11.3) or by section 1 of P.L.2018, c.28 (C.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;

(3) ensure that the school receives appropriate reimbursement, from the State and federal governments, for meals provided 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

(4) facilitate school aid determinations under the "School Funding Reform Act of 2008," P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-43 et seq.).

d. The school district shall require the parent or guardian 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 or guardian 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 or guardian 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, the school district shall make at least one attempt to contact the student's parent or guardian and request that the parent or guardian submit either an application or signed card.

e. The provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of a school which participates in the Community Eligibility Provision.

(cf: P.L.2022, c.104, s.16)

2. This act shall take effect in the first full school year following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

The bill directs, at the beginning of each school year, and upon initial enrollment in the case of a student enrolling during the school year, a school district to require the parent or guardian of each student to either submit an application to apply for the National School Lunch Program and the federal School Breakfast Program or submit a signed card provided by the school district indicating that the parent or guardian has received the application and information and is not interested in participating in the school lunch and school breakfast programs. If the school district does not receive an application or a signed card, the school district is required to make

A5164 COUGHLIN, QUIJANO

4

1 at least one attempt to contact the student's parent or guardian and
2 request that the parent submit either an application or signed card.

3 The bill also requires that the information and application
4 distributed to students' parents and guardians on the school lunch and
5 school breakfast programs by school districts be provided in a hard
6 copy format and include a notice that an application may be submitted
7 at any time during the school year and is required to be submitted
8 annually. School districts may also provide information in electronic
9 form.

10 The provisions of the bill will not apply to schools which
11 participate in the Community Eligibility Provision.