

HOUSE BILL 1152

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By: **Delegates Queen, Charkoudian, Crutchfield, Fraser-Hidalgo, Hornberger, Moon, Palakovich Carr, Qi, Shetty, and Solomon**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2020

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Schools – Student Meal Programs and Policies**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a public school to notify a student’s parent or legal guardian
4 about the status of certain school meal accounts under certain circumstances;
5 prohibiting a public school from communicating about certain unpaid meal debt
6 directly with a student or in a certain manner; prohibiting a public school from
7 taking certain actions in response to a student’s unpaid meal debt; authorizing a
8 public school to provide a certain alternative meal under certain conditions;
9 requiring a public school to ensure that parents and legal guardians of students are
10 notified about the application process and eligibility requirements for certain meal
11 programs in a certain manner; requiring a public school to allow a student to apply
12 for certain meal programs at any time; requiring a certain public school to enroll a
13 certain transfer student in a certain meal program; requiring each county board of
14 education to determine whether each school in its jurisdiction is in compliance with
15 certain federal policies and standards and to report its findings to the State
16 Department of Education each year; defining a certain term; and generally relating
17 to student meal programs in public schools.

18 BY adding to

19 Article – Education

20 Section 7–125

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

23 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

24 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

25 **Article – Education**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **7-125.**

2 (A) IN THIS SECTION, "UNPAID MEAL DEBT" MEANS DEBT OWED TO A
3 SCHOOL BY A STUDENT FOR SCHOOL MEALS OR INSUFFICIENT FUNDS IN THE
4 STUDENT'S MEAL ACCOUNT.

5 (B) A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL NOTIFY A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A
6 STUDENT WHEN THERE IS A LOW BALANCE IN THE STUDENT'S MEAL ACCOUNT AND
7 BEFORE THE STUDENT ACCRUES UNPAID MEAL DEBT.

8 (C) A PUBLIC SCHOOL MAY NOT:

9 (1) COMMUNICATE ABOUT UNPAID MEAL DEBT DIRECTLY WITH A
10 STUDENT OR IN A MANNER THAT HUMILIATES, EMBARRASSES, OR STIGMATIZES THE
11 STUDENT; OR

12 (2) IN RESPONSE TO A STUDENT'S UNPAID MEAL DEBT:

13 (I) REQUIRE THE STUDENT TO WEAR A WRISTBAND, HAND
14 STAMP, STICKER, OR OTHER IDENTIFYING MARK;

15 (II) REQUIRE THE STUDENT TO COMPLETE CHORES OR TASKS;

16 (III) DENY A MEAL TO THE STUDENT;

17 (IV) DISPOSE OF A MEAL AFTER IT HAS BEEN SERVED TO THE
18 STUDENT; OR

19 (V) RESTRICT A STUDENT FROM ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS
20 OR PARTICIPATION IN ANY SCHOOL-RELATED EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY.

21 (D) A PUBLIC SCHOOL MAY PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE MEAL INSTEAD OF A
22 STANDARD MEAL IF THE MEAL:

23 (1) MEETS THE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS OF THE U.S.
24 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; AND

25 (2) IS AVAILABLE TO ALL STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL, REGARDLESS OF
26 UNPAID MEAL DEBT.

27 (E) (1) A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL ENSURE THAT A PARENT OR LEGAL
28 GUARDIAN OF EACH STUDENT IS NOTIFIED ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND
29 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCHOOL'S FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEAL

1 PROGRAMS BY PROVIDING:

2 (I) ASSISTANCE IN UNDERSTANDING THE APPLICATION
3 PROCESS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; AND

4 (II) PRINTED APPLICATIONS IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES.

5 (2) A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL ALLOW A STUDENT TO APPLY FOR THE
6 SCHOOL'S FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEAL PROGRAMS AT ANY TIME DURING THE
7 YEAR.

8 (3) IF A STUDENT WHO QUALIFIES FOR A FREE OR REDUCED PRICE
9 MEAL PROGRAM TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER SCHOOL WITHIN THE SAME
10 JURISDICTION, THE NEW SCHOOL SHALL ENROLL THE STUDENT IN THE
11 CORRESPONDING FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEAL PROGRAM.

12 (F) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL:

13 (1) DETERMINE WHETHER EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS
14 JURISDICTION IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE POLICIES AND STANDARDS OF THE U.S.
15 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REGARDING COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT MEAL
16 CHARGE POLICIES; AND

17 (2) REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT ITS FINDINGS EACH YEAR.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2020.