

CHAPTER 94

AN ACT concerning the fees of payment processing platforms used by schools and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

C.18A:6-110.2 Findings, declarations.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. School food authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are required to provide fee-free avenues to pay for school lunch and inform families about all available payment methods, including associated fees.

b. However, these fee-free options are not always well advertised or accessible. Despite requirements from the USDA, families may be paying more in fees than they would choose to if they had access to comparably convenient payment options with lower or no fees.

c. School districts are able to negotiate fees while contracting with payment platforms.

C.18A:6-110.3 Definitions.

2. As used in this act:

“Payment processing platform” means a payment system that enables parents or guardians of students to make electronic payments for school meals, field trips, activity fees, or other goods or services provided by or distributed through the public or nonpublic school or any school, group, or club thereof.

“Public school” means a school located in New Jersey, under collegiate grade, which is operated by a school district, a charter school established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-1 et seq.), or a renaissance school project established pursuant to P.L.2011, c.176 (C.18A:36C-1 et seq.).

C.18A:6-110.4 Payment processing platforms, public schools, provide users information on fees, payments.

3. Any contract entered into on or after the effective date of this act by a board of education, a board of trustees, or the lead administrator of a nonpublic school with a third-party vendor for the development or use of a payment processing platform shall require the payment processing platform to provide users with clear information on:

- a. all fees charged for use of the platform;
- b. the average annual fees incurred by a user of the platform; and
- c. the availability of an alternative no-fee means to make direct payments through the board of education, board of trustees, or nonpublic school.

C.18A:6-110.5 Public schools, no-fee option for making direct payments for services.

4. a. A public school shall offer students, parents, and guardians a no-fee option for making direct payments for school meals, field trips, activity fees, or other goods or services provided by or distributed through the public school, or any school, group, or club thereof. The option shall be provided at a time and place that is convenient for student, parent, and guardian use.

b. Any communication from the board of education or board of trustees, or any school, group, or club thereof, requesting payment for school meals, field trips, activity fees, or other goods or services shall include information on:

- (1) the direct payment option required pursuant to subsection a. of this section; and
- (2) the fees associated with use of any payment processing platform that may be used to make the payment.

C.18A:6-110.6 Nonpublic schools participating in federally assisted meal programs, no-fee option for direct payments.

5. a. A nonpublic school participating in a federally assisted meal program that provides low-cost or free meals to students shall offer students, parents, and guardians a no-fee option for making direct payments for school meals. The option shall be provided at a time and place that is convenient for student, parent, and guardian use.

b. Any communication from the lead administrator of a nonpublic school requesting payment for school meals shall include information on:

- (1) the direct payment option required pursuant to subsection a. of this section; and
- (2) the fees associated with use of any payment processing platform that may be used to make the payment.

C.18A:6-110.7 Construction of act.

6. Nothing in this act shall be construed to prohibit the payment of tuition and tuition-related fees to a nonpublic school.

7. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to the first full school year following the date of enactment.

Approved July 8, 2025.