

**ASSEMBLY, No. 3528**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**220th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED MARCH 8, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT**

**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires each school district with middle school or high school to establish food services advisory committee to consider menu options that reflect students' cultural, traditional, and dietary preferences.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning school breakfast and lunch menus and  
2 supplementing chapter 33 of Title 18A of the New Jersey  
3 Statutes.

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

7  
8 1. a. The chief school administrator or a designee of each  
9 school district that includes a middle school or high school, where a  
10 need is determined pursuant to subsection f. of this section, shall  
11 establish a food services advisory committee to consider and  
12 recommend school breakfast and lunch menu options that better  
13 reflect the cultural, traditional, and dietary food preferences of the  
14 student body including, but not limited to, vegetarian and vegan  
15 meal options. The committee shall serve in an advisory capacity  
16 and make recommendations to school principals, the chief school  
17 administrator or a designee, and the food services provider.

18 b. Members of the committee shall be selected by the chief  
19 school administrator or a designee and shall include a principal or a  
20 designee, a food services employee of the district or contractor as  
21 applicable, the chief school administrator or a designee, at least four  
22 students enrolled in the school district's middle schools or high  
23 schools, and one or more parents of those students. A student who  
24 expresses an interest in participating on the committee shall be  
25 considered for membership. In the event that a school nurse  
26 expresses an interest in participating on the committee, the chief  
27 school administrator or a designee shall appoint a school nurse to  
28 the committee.

29 c. The committee shall convene at least three times during each  
30 school year with at least one meeting in each half of the school  
31 year.

32 d. In making its recommendations for new menu options that  
33 better reflect the cultural, traditional, and dietary food preferences  
34 of the student body, the committee shall also consider: available  
35 funding for the school breakfast and school lunch program,  
36 equipment, and other issues that may serve to limit food choices;  
37 the ability of the food services provider and its employees to  
38 comply with the recommendations; and the nutritional value of the  
39 new menu options.

40 e. Any new menu options offered by the school district shall  
41 meet nutritional standards in the National School Lunch and School  
42 Breakfast Programs.

43 f. To determine the need for a food services advisory  
44 committee in a particular school district, a district shall provide a  
45 written form to each student enrolled in the district's middle schools  
46 and high schools to inquire on whether the student has an unmet  
47 cultural, traditional, or dietary food preference. At a minimum the  
48 form shall include an area for the student's name and contact

1 information, an area for the student to describe any unmet food  
2 preference requested to be addressed, a question on whether the  
3 student would like vegetarian or vegan meal options offered in  
4 addition to the current meal options, and an area where the student  
5 may request to participate on the food services advisory committee.  
6 The form shall also be made available to students and parents on the  
7 school district's Internet website.

8 g. The requirements of this section may be suspended for one  
9 school year at the discretion of the chief school administrator in the  
10 event that:

11 (1) no student indicates an unmet food preference on the written  
12 or Internet form; or

13 (2) the response of students on the written or Internet form is de  
14 minimis in nature and the food preferences of those students can be  
15 met to the satisfaction of the students without a food services  
16 advisory committee.

17 h. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection g. of this  
18 section to the contrary, if a student expresses an interest in  
19 vegetarian or vegan menu items, the school district shall make all  
20 reasonable efforts to expand its school breakfast and school lunch  
21 menus to include hot and cold vegetarian and vegan meal options.

22 i. In the event that on the effective date of this section, a  
23 school district has a method for resolving student grievances that  
24 includes student representation, the school district may substitute  
25 that body in the place of a food services advisory committee and  
26 that body shall fulfill the requirements established pursuant to this  
27 section. If at any time that body is no longer functional, the school  
28 district shall comply with the requirements of this section within 60  
29 days.

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

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#### STATEMENT

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37 This bill directs the chief school administrator of a school district  
38 that includes a middle school or high school to establish a food  
39 services advisory committee to consider and recommend school  
40 breakfast and lunch menu options that better reflect the cultural,  
41 traditional, and dietary food preferences of the student body, including  
42 vegetarian and vegan meal options. The committee will serve in an  
43 advisory capacity and make recommendations to the chief school  
44 administrator, the school principals, and the food services provider.

45 Under the bill, the members of the committee will be selected by  
46 the chief school administrator or a designee and will include a  
47 principal or a designee, a food services employee, the chief school  
48 administrator or a designee, at least four students enrolled in the school

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1 district's middle schools or high schools, and one or more parents of  
2 those students. In the event that a school nurse expresses an interest in  
3 serving on the food services advisory committee, the chief school  
4 administrator or a designee will appoint a school nurse to the  
5 committee.

6 In making its recommendations for new menu options, the  
7 committee is directed to also consider: available funding for the school  
8 breakfast and school lunch programs, equipment, and other issues that  
9 may serve to limit food choices; the ability of the food services  
10 provider and its employees to comply with the recommendations; and  
11 the nutritional value of the new menu options. Finally, the bill  
12 provides that any new menu options offered by the school district must  
13 meet nutritional standards in the National School Lunch and School  
14 Breakfast Programs.

15 To determine the need for a food services advisory committee in a  
16 particular school district, a district must provide a written form to each  
17 student enrolled in the district's middle schools and high schools to  
18 inquire on whether the student has an unmet food preference. The  
19 form will also be available on the school district's Internet website.  
20 The bill's requirements may be suspended for one school year at the  
21 discretion of the chief school administrator in the event that 1) no  
22 student indicates an unmet food preference on the written or Internet  
23 form, or 2) the response of students is de minimis in nature and the  
24 food preferences of those students can be met to the satisfaction of the  
25 students without a food services advisory committee.

26 In the event that on the bill's effective date a school district has a  
27 method for resolving student grievances that includes student  
28 representation, the school district may substitute that body in the place  
29 of a food services advisory committee and that body will fulfill the  
30 requirements established under the bill.