

A message from the Superintendent of the Cherry Hill Public Schools.



CHPS WEEKLY

District News for the week ending October 25, 2019

Statement Regarding Unpaid

UPCOMING
EVENTS
Safety & Security

Meals Policy

A statement from Superintendent Dr. Joseph Meloche regarding recent misinformation about Policy 8550 - Unpaid Meal Charges/Outstanding Food Service Charges

In Cherry Hill, all children who get in line for lunch, are provided the lunch of their choice, regardless of whether they have money for it. All children are fed. This has been, and always will be, the case. Children need to eat. A child who is well nourished is healthier and has the opportunity to be more successful in school.

Like many school districts, Cherry Hill works to support students with compassion when outside factors influence their in-school experience, while also being fiscally responsible to the taxpayers who fund everyday operations. This week, inaccurate news reports shined a harsh – and false – light on our community. Our Board of Education members – all volunteers who give freely of their time to our community – and our administrators have been unfairly vilified. Our School Board worked diligently on the current state mandated policy, providing additional contact and support for families who qualify for free and reduced price meals, who do not qualify but are struggling financially, and who accrue meal debt for reasons beyond financial hardships.

Facts about the district's [updated policy for unpaid meal charges](#):

- The practice that guides unpaid meal charges *has never and will never* affect students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
- For the majority of families, an over-drawn lunch account is an oversight that is corrected soon after the shortage is brought to their attention.
- The multi-step process of addressing unpaid meal charges includes written letters, personal phone calls, the offer of application forms for free/reduced price meals, and face to face meetings with the parents and district staff members. It can stretch over nine weeks or more before additional action may be taken, which gives parents multiple opportunities to communicate hardships and complete paperwork to alleviate past debt and future costs.
- If parents do not take steps to demonstrate need or communicate a plan for paying for meals, the district **may** restrict a student's participation in

Forum

October 29 @ 7 pm
Cherry Hill High School
West Auditorium
2101 Chapel Ave.

Policy & Legislation Committee Meeting

November 4 @ 5 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting

November 4 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace

Business & Facilities Committee Meeting

November 4 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace

Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

November 4 @ 8 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace

SCHOOLS CLOSED

November 7 & 8

Board of Education Work Session

November 12 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace

Board of Education Action Meeting

November 26 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo

activities unrelated to education. This is neither a mandated nor automatic “next step;” there is still room for compassion. Unpaid meal charges **will not** impact participation in sports, music programs, educational field trips, or other co-curricular opportunities.

- All communications with families related to unpaid debt, including meals, activity fees, etc., are handled with discretion and confidentiality, regardless of the reasons for the debt.

It is our greatest hope and our primary goal that, with the increased outreach to all families in arrears, we would never reach the point of revoking privileges from any student.

The district was made aware of a local businessman’s apparent offer to address the issue of unpaid meal charges. The district reached out to that businessman, and has not yet received any response.

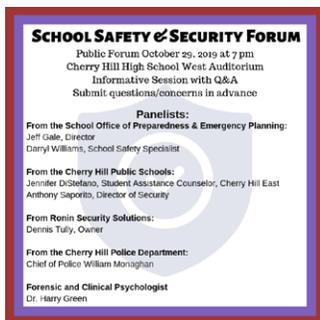
Beyond providing both breakfast and lunch to students in grades pre-K – 12, our school community goes beyond district policy and state mandates to take care of our students and food-insecure families. Last year we sponsored a Friday Food Backpack Program, which provides additional support and sustenance during the weekend and holidays, to nearly 50 families a week. This program was funded through a now expired grant. If you are inclined and able to provide financial supports for families, funds may be donated to the Food Backpack Program (contact the district at awilson@chclc.org for details), and monies may always be donated directly to one of our 19 PTAs to benefit children via holiday gift card drives and contributions toward Prom.

In my role as superintendent, I am honored to serve a community that I love, a community that I want to see thrive as a whole. Our formal policy, everyday practice, and nurturing community culture ensure that every student has access to meals while in school. I shall continue to work to ensure that we, as a school district, are doing all that we are able to prepare all of our children to be successful in the world.

Regards,

Joe Meloche

Joe Meloche



Security

Forum Questions and Concerns Sought

Questions and concerns related to District safety and security may be submitted via [an online portal](#) by 5 pm on Monday, October 28, 2019 in advance of the Safety & Security Forum on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 at 7 pm in the Cherry Hill High School West Auditorium.

The following experts will participate in the panel discussion and Q&A at the forum:

From the School Office of Preparedness and Emergency Planning:

Jeff Gale, Director, and Darryl Williams, School Safety Specialist

From the Cherry Hill Public Schools:

Jennifer DiStefano, Student Assistance Counselor, Cherry Hill East, and Anthony Saporito, Director of Security

From Ronin Security Solutions:

Dennis Tully, Owner

From the Cherry Hill Police Department:

Chief of Police William Monaghan

And Forensic and Clinical Psychologist Dr. Harry Green



BOE Candidate Bios and Candidates Forum Video Available Online

[Biographies of the 10 candidates running for the four open seats on the Cherry Hill Board of Education are now available online.](#) The biographies listed in ballot order and are published as submitted by the candidates, unedited.

The candidates participated in a Candidates Forum, sponsored by the Cherry Hill Zone PTA, on October 10. Moderated by the League of Women Voters, the forum offered an opportunity for community members to ask questions of the candidates.

A recording of the forum is available on the [District YouTube channel](#).



CHPS schools recognized as National Schools of Character

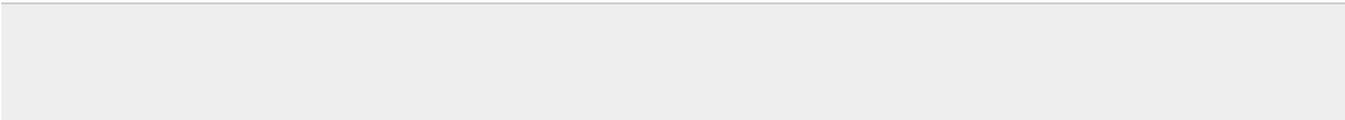
Five Cherry Hill schools were recognized at the 2019 Character.org National Forum for their designation as National Schools of Character.

[Character.org](#) certifies schools and districts at the state and national level that demonstrate a dedicated focus on character development, which has a positive effect on academic achievement, student behavior, and school climate. "National School of Character" is Character.org's highest distinction.

J.F. Cooper, James Johnson, Kingston and Woodcrest Elementary Schools all were recognized for achieving National School of Character designations for the first time.

Henry C. Beck Middle School was recognized for being re-certified as a National School of Character.

Congratulations to all!



You are receiving this email because of your relationship with Cherry Hill Public Schools. If you wish to stop receiving email updates sent through the Blackboard service, please [unsubscribe](#).

Cherry Hill Public Schools | 45 Ranoldo Terrace, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 | 856-429-5600