



August 28, 2023

School Lunch Debt Relief

Dear Community Members,

As some of you may know, last school year the USDA discontinued the COVID era policy of providing free school lunches for all students. Delanco Schools are committed to feeding all students, but in the process, we provided over \$7,000 in meals for which we received no payment. There are many reasons why families fall behind this way – they may qualify for free or reduced cost lunches, but the paperwork takes time, and the benefits are not retroactive; they may experience a loss like a breadwinner illness or a house fire. Still, we are required to try to collect that debt, which is a burden both on the district and the families who cannot afford it.

We are pleased to announce that this year things will be different. First, the district has partnered with a local South Jersey charity, Hungry Minds, Inc., to establish a cafeteria account that our food service management can use to pay for meals when our students' families cannot pay. They have committed at least \$5,000 for the school year. This will prevent debts from piling up this coming school year.

Second, Hungry Minds has given us \$1,000 towards last year's debt, and they are offering a chance to the community to support the district as well via an on-line campaign:

- Hungry Minds has set up a website on the charitable payments platform Givebutter.com dedicated to the Delanco School District meal debt.
- The URL for this campaign is <https://givebutter.com/B57Xki>
- Every penny donated via this link will go towards Delanco's school meals debts
- Finally, Hungry Minds will match \$0.50 of every dollar for the first \$2,000 donated by the community. This means that \$2,000 in gifts will generate \$3,000 for the district. \$5,000 will generate \$6,000 and the debt would be paid off.
- Hungry Minds is a 501(c)3 charitable private foundation. Donations to such organizations are generally tax deductible. Hungry Minds' website is <https://www.hungrymindsnj.com> where you can find all required disclosures and learn about their various programs.

Please consider making a gift. \$1, \$5, \$20 – every gift will make a difference to families in the Delanco School district who need assistance.

Best regards,

Daniel Rath, School Business Administrator
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