

Subject School Meals
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Date March 29, 2022

Overview

This bill requires all schools participating in the federal school meals program to offer free lunch and breakfast to all students, regardless of family income. Schools are reimbursed for the cost of each breakfast and lunch served to a student that is not otherwise covered by the federal reimbursement for the meal.

Because the number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals is important to calculate compensatory revenue, schools will continue to ask students to fill out free and reduced meal eligibility forms and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will continue to use direct certification to qualify students. Under direct certification, the Department of Human Services (DHS) uses data from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) to identify children who are automatically eligible for free meals. Students identified as participants in the DHS foster care program are also automatically eligible for free meals. Beginning with student enrollment count taken in the fall of 2022 direct certification will also match on the basis of a student's family qualifying for medical assistance.

Summary

Section	Description
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1	School lunch amounts.
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Requires all schools that are participating in the National School Lunch Program to provide for free a federally reimbursable lunch to all enrolled students each school day.

Requires the department to provide to each participant in the school lunch program an amount of state aid equal to the difference between the federal reimbursement for the meal and the USDA-defined average cost of a school meal.

Section	Description
2	No fees. [School lunch] Requires all schools participating in the National School Lunch program to provide a school lunch without charge to any student.
3	Purpose. [School breakfast] Amends the purpose statement for school breakfasts to require any school participating in the USDA school breakfast program to provide a free breakfast to all enrolled students each school day.
4	Program reimbursement. [School breakfast] Requires the department to provide to each participant in the school breakfast program state aid in an amount equal to the difference between the federal reimbursement for the breakfast and the USDA-defined average cost of a school breakfast.
5	No fees. [School breakfast aid] Includes early childhood special education students participating in a program under the voluntary prekindergarten statute to qualify for a free breakfast.
6	School lunch aid appropriation. Adjusts the school lunch aid appropriation to match the February 2022 forecast and increases the aid for fiscal year 2023 to provide free lunch for all students participating in the school lunch program.
7	School breakfast aid appropriation. Adjusts the school breakfast aid appropriation to match the February 2022 forecast and increases school breakfast aid for fiscal year 2023 to provide free school breakfasts for all students participating in the school breakfast program.



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