

Subject School meals

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Overview

This bill requires schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) available under the federal school lunch program if they are eligible to do so. The CEP allows qualifying schools and local education agencies (a term that includes districts) to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting information about household income for any student. A school and local educational agency are eligible to use the CEP if they had at least 40 percent of students in the prior school year who qualified for free meals through direct certification. Schools and districts using CEP must serve free breakfast and lunch to all students during a four-year cycle.

Schools are reimbursed using a formula that is based on the percentage of students who are eligible for free meals based on their family's participation in specific programs. Through a process called 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. Direct certification does not identify students eligible for reduced-price lunch.

In Minnesota, an individual student qualifies for a free school meal through either direct certification or by submitting a form that states the student's household income. The federal poverty guidelines are used to determine eligibility based on household income. The form is used for other purposes too, including determining a school or district's compensatory revenue.

Summary

Section	Description
1	<p>No fees. [School meals policies; lunch aid; food service accounting]</p> <p>Clarifies scope of prohibition on participants in school lunch aid program charging students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals for lunch.</p>
2	<p>Healthy and hunger-free schools program.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines terms used in federal statutes and regulations on child nutrition programs, including “community eligibility provision,” and “local educational agency.”</p> <p>The “community eligibility provision” (CEP) is a reimbursement option available for the national school lunch and breakfast programs.</p> <p>A “local educational agency” (LEA) is a term used in federal law to broadly refer to the board of a public or private nonprofit authority that has administrative control of a public or private nonprofit elementary or secondary school; the term includes residential child care institutions, and consortia of those agencies.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Purpose. Establishes the purpose of the healthy and hunger-free schools program.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Lunch and breakfast offered without charge to students. Requires participants in the national school lunch program to make breakfast and lunch available without charge to students in kindergarten through grade 12, and to students enrolled in a voluntary prekindergarten program.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Department duties. Requires the department to identify LEAs that qualify to use the CEP and notify them of their eligibility status and obligation to participate. Requires the department to provide technical assistance to LEAs in meeting state and federal requirements to receive reimbursement through the CEP. Requires the department to help schools and districts ineligible to use the CEP to become eligible, if feasible. Requires the department to encourage and provide technical assistance to schools to offer breakfast after the bell programs.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Federal reimbursement through community eligibility provision. Requires each LEA to claim reimbursement for the CEP for each of its schools participating in the national school lunch program that are identified by the department as eligible for reimbursement, and to provide the department any necessary documentation.</p> <p>Subd. 6. School lunch aid computation. Requires the state to pay participants in the federal school lunch program the difference, if any, between the applicable federal free rate and any amounts paid by federal sources for each lunch served;</p>

Section	Description
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and to reimburse participants an additional \$0.125 for each lunch reimbursed by the federal government at the national school lunch program free or reduced-price lunch rate. Requires the department to adopt any rules necessary.

Subd. 7. School breakfast aid computation. Requires the state to pay participants in the federal school breakfast program the difference, if any, between the applicable federal free rate and any amounts paid by federal sources for each breakfast served. Requires the department to adopt any rules necessary.

3 **Repealer.**

Repeals the following:

- Section 124D.111, subdivisions 1 (school meals policies) and 2 (state school lunch aid for students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch);
- Section 124D.1158 (school breakfast program); and
- Section 124D.117 (districts to offer school breakfast program).



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