

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 2280  
**Version:** As introduced

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**Subject:** School Lunches; State Reimbursement for Unpaid Meals

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### Overview

The federal government provides substantial funding for school meals programs. The federal aid is based on the student's ability to pay, as measured by the student's family's level of income. For most schools, the federal government pays \$2.93 for each meal served to a student who qualifies for a free meal, \$2.53 for each meal served to a student who qualifies for a reduced-price school meal, and \$0.28 per meal for each fully paid school lunch. As a result of this reimbursement structure, students who qualify for reduced-price meals usually pay a fee of 40 cents per meal.

Minnesota supplements the federal school lunch payments with an added amount of state aid, equal to 12.5 cents for each lunch served.

This bill requires the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to reimburse school districts and other providers of school meals for the amount of any unpaid meals. A school district may apply to MDE for reimbursement of unpaid meals if the school board has adopted a policy allowing a student who has an outstanding lunch balance to continue to receive the same school lunch as all other students.

### Section

- 1 Lunch aid; food service accounting.** Allows the school board or governing body of an organization serving school meals to adopt a policy to ensure that all students receive the same meal, regardless of whether the student has an outstanding balance on his or her account. Requires the policy to specify that reminders for low balances must be done in a manner that does not demean or stigmatize students. Allows the school board or other school lunch participant to apply for reimbursement from MDE for any unpaid amounts.

**Section**

- 2**      **Appropriation; MDE.** Includes a rider on the appropriation of the Minnesota Department of Education budget to allow any amount appropriated under that subdivision to be used to make the payments required under section 1 of this bill.