

2023 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1491

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1491
1/30/2023

A BILL to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for lunch for students
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Chairman Heinert opened the hearing 3:22 PM

Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Free lunch for all
- Student debt policies
- Federal low-cost lunch program
- Compulsory education
- Community eligibility

Representative Laurie Beth Hager, presented HB 1491, Testimony #17563, #17571, #17572, #17573

Representative Zach Ista, Grand Forks, Testimony #17746

Nick Archuleta, President, ND United, Testimony #17711

Landis Larson, President of AFLCIO, Testimony #17592

Deb Egeland, former school food service director, IBAND (Independent Beef Association of ND), Testimony #17517

Devin Manzick, Minot, oral testimony

Sharnell Seaboy, Field Organizer, ND Native Vote, Testimony #17875

Carol Two Eagles, White Shield ND, oral testimony

Cory Hart, farmer rancher feedlot owner, Bowdon Meat Processing, oral testimony

Shane Gettle, State association of non-public schools, oral testimony

Linda Schloer, Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Program, DPI, Testimony #17865

Additional written testimony:

Heather Gades, Miss Bonanzaville 2023, Testimony #17542

Jeremy Maher, Testimony #17578

Katie Barber, Testimony #17581

Kia Seidlinger, Testimony #17608

Jason Ehlert, Testimony #17628

Karen Ehrens, Testimony #17645

Faye Seidler, Testimony #17676

Kara Geiger, Testimony #17789

Melissa Sobolik, Testimony #17808

Elizabeth Pihlaja, Testimony #17814

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Matt Perdue, Testimony #17827
Jacqueline Dotzenrod, Testimony #17840
Alexis Bylander, Testimony #17842
Jonathan Moser, Testimony #17844
Michelle Wagner, Testimony #17857
Rebecca Knutson, Testimony #17863
Janelle Albrecht, Testimony #17868
Julie St. Germaine, #17877
Jennifer Folliard, Testimony #17878
Grant Syverson, Testimony #17882
Deven Mantz, Testimony #18093

4:20 PM Chairman Heinert closed the hearing.

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1491

2/6/2023

A BILL to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for lunch for students
--

9:46 AM

Chairman Heinert opened the meeting. Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Free school lunches
- Private school
- Public school
- Excluding current provided meals
- Federal government
- Covid breakfast dollars
- State costs for free or reduced meals
- Small districts struggles
- Variable meal rate by grade
- Poverty disparity

Linda Schloer, Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs, DPI, was called forward to answer questions

10:07 AM Chairman Heinert closed the meeting.

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1491
2/6/2023

A BILL to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for lunch for students
--

Chairman Heinert opened the meeting at 3:45 PM

Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Free meals for all ND Public schools

Linda Schloer, Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs, DPI, answered questions for the committee

4:00 PM Chairman Heinert closed the meeting.

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk By: Leah Kuball

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1491
2/6/2023

A BILL to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for lunch for students
--

5:00 PM Chairman Heinert opened the meeting.

Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Free meals for all ND Public schools
- Amendment (23.0847.01002)
- Committee action

Rep Murphy moved an amendment change the sum in line 6, to \$6 million; add language providing grants to school districts to provide free meals for all students at or below the 200% poverty level, enrolled in public schools for the biennium, seconded by Rep Conmy. **Amendment was withdrawn.**

Rep Murphy moved an amendment on Line 5, grants for free meals, strike lunches, sum is \$6 million, and Line 9 after all students, insert at or below 200% of federal poverty level, seconded by Rep Conmy.

Linda Schloer, Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs, DPI, answered questions for the committee.

Voice vote. Motion carried.

Rep Hager moved to adopt proposed amendment 23.0847.01001 (Testimony #19528), seconded by Rep Schreiber-Beck. **Voice vote. Motion failed.**

Rep Hager moved a Do Pass as Amended and Rerefer to Appropriations, seconded by Rep Novak.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	N
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	Y
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative Scott Dyk	N
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y

Representative Matt Heilman	N
Representative Jeff A. Hoverson	N
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	N
Representative Eric James Murphy	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Kelby Timmons	N

8-6-0 Motion carried. Rep Murphy is carrier.

5:28 PM Chairman Heinert closed the meeting.

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

February 6, 2023

2/6-23

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1491

Page 1, line 2, replace "lunch" with "meals"

Page 1, line 5, replace "**LUNCHES**" with "**MEALS**"

Page 1, line 6, replace "\$89,500,000" with "\$6,000,000"

Page 1, line 8, replace "lunch" with "meals"

Page 1, line 9, after "students" insert "at or below two hundred percent of federal poverty level"

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1491: Education Committee (Rep. Heinert, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (8 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1491 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 2, replace "lunch" with "meals"

Page 1, line 5, replace "**LUNCHES**" with "**MEALS**"

Page 1, line 6, replace "\$89,500,000" with "\$6,000,000"

Page 1, line 8, replace "lunch" with "meals"

Page 1, line 9, after "students" insert "at or below two hundred percent of federal poverty level"

Renumber accordingly

2023 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

HB 1491

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

HB 1491
2/15/2023

BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for meals for students.
--

10:26 AM Chairman Vigesaa- Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken:

Members present; Chairman Vigesaa, Representative Kempenich, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Members not Present- Representative Bellew

Discussion Topics:

- Feeds Kids in School
- Raises Poverty Level for Reduced Lunches
- Will Add About 10 Thousand Students

Representative Heinrt- Introduces HB 1491

Linda Schloer, Director Child Nutrition and Food Distribution ND Department of Public Instruction - Answers committee question

Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for HB 1491 @ 10:41 AM

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

HB 1491
2/15/2023

BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for meals for students.
--

7:37 PM Chairman Vigesaa- Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken:

All Members present- Chairman Vigesaa, Representative Kempenich, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Bellew, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Discussion Topics:

- Expands Free and Reduced School Lunches

Representative J. Stemen- Move for a Do Pass

Representative Swiontek - Seconds the motion.

Committee discussion Roll call vote

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	Y
Representative Keith Kempenich	Y
Representative Bert Anderson	Y
Representative Larry Bellew	Y
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	Y
Representative Bob Martinson	Y
Representative Lisa Meier	Y
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y
Representative Emily O'Brien	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y

House Appropriations Committee

HB 1491

Feb. 15th 2023

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Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	Y
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	Y
Representative Greg Stemen	Y
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	Y

Motion Carries 23-0-0 Representative Murphy will carry the bill.

7:55 PM Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for HB 1491

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1491, as engrossed: Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (23 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
Engrossed HB 1491 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2023 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1491

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1491
3/15/2023

To provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for meals for students.
--

2:55 PM Chair Elkin opened the hearing. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Free lunches
- Poverty index
- State funded

Rep LaurieBeth Hager, Dist 21, bill sponsor testified in support #25095, #25351.

Landis Larson, Pres AFL-CIO, testified in support #24563.

Bob Marthaller, ND United, testified in support #25148.

Kevin Hoherz, ND Council Educational Leaders, testified in support #24567.

Michelle Wagner, ND School Nutritionist Assoc. testified in support #25235.

Heather Gades, Miss Bonzanaville, Fargo, ND testified in support #24695.

Shane Goettle, Non-Public Schools Assoc, testified in support #25291.

Linda Schloer, ND Child Nutrition Dept Public Instruction testified neutral #25257.

Additional written testimony:

Jennifer Folliard, Community HealthCare, Bismarck, ND in support #23688.

Karen Ehrens, Bismarck, ND in support #23900.

Jason Ehlert, Mandan, ND in support #24442.

Sharnell Seaboy, ND Native Vote in support #24928.

Cassidy Lyngaas, Pettibone, ND in support #25200.

Matt Perdue, ND Farmers Union, Jamestown, ND in support #25220.

Jason Boynton, ND Lunch Aid, Fargo, ND in support #25228.

Melissa Sobolik, Great Plains Food Bank, Fargo, ND in support #25271.

Danielle Walz, #25277, #25278, #25279, #25281

3:32 PM Chair Elkin closed the hearing.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1491
3/20/2023

Provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants for lunch for students.
--

11:37 Am Chair Elkin opened committee work. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Bill review
- Insert “non-public schools”

Jim Upgren, Dept Public Instruction answered questions.

11:49 AM Chair Elkin adjourned the meeting.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1491
3/21/2023

Provide an appropriation to the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for meals for students.

10:17 AM Chair Elkin opened committee work. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Bill review
- Program enrollment

Linda Schloer, Child Nutrition/Food Distribution, Dept Public Instruction, verbally provided information.

Sen Wobbema moved a DO NOT PASS.

Sen Conley seconded.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	N
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	N
Senator Cole Conley	N
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 3 NO – 3 Absent – 0 Motion FAILED

Sen Axtman moved amendment LC 23.0847.02001.

Sen Beard seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 6 NO – 0 Absent – 0 Motion PASSED

Sen Axtman moved a DO PASS as Amended. Sen Conley seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	N
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	N
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	N

VOTE: YES – 3 NO – 3 Absent – 0 Motion FAILED

Sen Axtman moved pass out of committee Without Recommendation as Amended.

Sen Conley seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 6 NO – 0 Absent – 0 Motion PASSED

Senator Elkin will carry the bill.

10:35 AM Chair Elkin adjourned the meeting.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

23.0847.02001
Title.03000

Adopted by the Senate Education Committee

March 21, 2023

AG
3-21-23
(1-1)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1491

Page 1, line 9, after "public" insert "or nonpublic"

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1491, as engrossed: Education Committee (Sen. Elkin, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **BE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1491 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Page 1, line 9, after "public" insert "or nonpublic"

Renumber accordingly

TESTIMONY

HB 1491

1 Testimony for HB 1491 Deb Egeland, on behalf of Independent Beef Association of ND.

2 Good Afternoon Chairman Heinert and Education Committee members. Thank you for considering this
3 bill.

4 My name is Deb Egeland. I was a school food service director for 8 years and worked at DPI Child
5 Nutrition for 25 years, plus, I am a parent. I represent I-BAND, the Independent Beef Association of
6 North Dakota. We are a group of ranchers that would like to see relief for working parents struggling to
7 pay for school meals while also supporting local communities.

8 The federal government does provide funding for school meals for families that meet income guidelines
9 for free and reduced-price meals. The state is already covering the 30 cents families would normally pay
10 for reduced-price breakfasts. This bill would provide funding to cover the 40 cents reduced-price parents
11 currently pay for lunch and the normal paid price for families that do not qualify for free or reduced-
12 price meals.

13 Reduced-price families are often the working poor who hold down 2 or 3 jobs and might be just \$5 over
14 the income limit for free meals. Paid status families are also struggling. Inflation has cut into their
15 budgets even though they work hard at their jobs every day.

16 Many of our state legislators would like to see some sort of tax relief for working families. This bill would
17 provide much needed financial relief for our hard-working families. Funding the school meals would put
18 more money back in the pockets of working families in the same way that tax relief would. We know
19 the money would be spent on school meals that are vital to our students while they are growing and
20 learning. Everyone wants to give students a good breakfast on test day, what about all the other days
21 while they are absorbing the knowledge they need for test days? This is an investment in growing and
22 nourishing our future generation while also providing much needed financial relief to our working
23 families right now.

24 If the \$89.5 million for breakfast and lunch sounds high, maybe you would could compromise on just
25 paying the reduced-price breakfast and lunch charges. This would alleviate subsidizing meals for wealthy
26 families, which is a concern of some of our own I-BAND members. Another compromise might be to just
27 pay for breakfast for all students to fuel the school day. We know that almost all the students ate
28 breakfast when it was offered free in the classroom during COVID.

29 There are some that would say spending money on food that is eaten and gone is frivolous. Maybe, if
30 the food was for a party or celebration. This is for school meals to fuel the brains and bodies of students
31 while they are in school learning.

32 We would like to propose an amendment to promote local economies by requiring schools to utilize a
33 portion of this funding on North Dakota locally grown/raised food, possibly 25%. This would ensure that
34 these state funds help support local agriculture. USDA recently awarded supply chain assistance funds to
35 schools with the caveat that the funds be spent on minimally processed foods, preferably local foods.
36 Schools should not have too much of a burden proving they purchased local beef, potatoes, pasta,
37 honey or other crops. Then the schools can spend their USDA foods (commodity) dollars on fruits and
38 vegetables not grown in our state. We have a saying for local foods: Kids win, farmers win, communities
39 win! Thank you for listening. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee,

My name is Heather Gades, and I am a titleholder at the local level within the Miss America Organization and a candidate for Miss North Dakota this coming June – however, my testimony does not necessarily reflect the views of either the Miss America Organization or the Miss North Dakota Organization. My current title is Miss Bonanzaville, and as a titleholder, we each select a service initiative that we want to support and work on during our year of service. Mine is Combatting Food Insecurity – One Box at a Time, a project that is the culmination of my six years of working on this issue. I have met with food pantries in the Fargo-Moorhead area, volunteered at a few, helped create the first food pantry at North Dakota State University (NDSU) called Goods for the Herd and currently am on the advisory board in a volunteer capacity, attended meetings, and read books to school children that talk about food insecurity, how it can happen to anyone, and who we can go to for help.

First, my testimony in favor of HB 1491, to provide free school lunch for students in grades K-12. In 2017 the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that 6% of children in North Dakota were living in “high poverty areas”. In 2022, the Great Plains Food Bank reported that their most recent estimates of food insecurity in the state were 1 in 6 people. To be food insecure is to have an inconsistent or no lack of access to foods, particularly foods that are high in nutrients and minerals. According to Feeding America, a child who is food insecure is at an increased risk of delayed development, chronic illnesses such as asthma and anemia, and behavioral troubles like anxiety, aggression, and hyperactivity. A 2019 study published in the American Academy of Pediatrics reported that asthma diagnosis rates and depressive symptoms were 19.1% and 27.9% higher respectively than children who were not in food

insecure households. That same study also noted that foregone medical care rates were 179.8% higher for those same households.

I understand that for many conservatives, the cost of this is prohibitive. I know it's not in the nature of many people to mark off a large chunk of money for something that won't benefit themselves at all. But I ask you to look past the price tag and see the change this funding could make in the lives of so many children in North Dakota. Children who are food insecure are fighting an uphill battle for the rest of their lives. One way this can be helped is to ensure that all school children in our state have access to consistent meals in school. Making sure that all kids, regardless of family income, can have at least five warm and nutritious meals a week is something we should not shy away from. While many kids from impoverished families may already be receiving free lunches, this bill would help the kids whose families are too proud or uncomfortable to apply for free lunches, as well as the families who swallowed their pride and asked for help, only to find out that they make just a little too much money to qualify for free or reduced meals, but not enough money to properly make ends meet. This was my family in 2016 when my mom did what most people would commend her for doing, and got a promotion at work. But with her new job, we didn't qualify for reduced price lunch anymore, and now had to pay full price for three kids eating lunch five days a week. This bill will protect families from having to worry about that, and keep children fed so they can focus in class, play with their friends or in sports after school, and their brain and body can develop fully.

Thank you for your time Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee.

Heather Gades, Miss Bonanzaville 2023

House Bill 1491

Chairman Heinert and Vice Chair Schreiber Beck and members of the House Education Committee. For the record, I am Representative LaurieBeth Hager from District 21 in the central part of Fargo and now including a small a portion of West Fargo. Within my district are 4 elementary schools, Madison, Jefferson, Hawthorne and LE Berger Elementary in West Fargo . There are middle students attending either Carl Ben Eielson or Ben Franklin Middle School or Cheney Middle School in WF. High school students attending either Fargo North or Fargo South High School or West Fargo HS. I am here today to present HB 1491 a bill to provide no cost school nutritional resources to ALL students attending Public Schools in our state of North Dakota and to use moneys from the state general funds.

I think each of us knows that if we are hungry or tired it is difficult to concentrate and therefore it is difficult to learn or even participate in classroom activities. Furthermore, my counseling background and experience as a mother, lead me to conclude that many classroom incidents or behavioral issues can be attributed to hunger/food insecurity.

According to the USDA, in 2020, 14.8 percent of children reported being food insecure in the past 30 days. 12 Million children live in food insecure households. What if a simple solution to enhance learning and prevent behavioral issues during the school day is simply to alleviate hunger and food insecurity ? Childhood Nutrition and early Brain development are directly connected.

The National School Lunch Program was initiated in 1946 after it was realized during WWII that many men were unable to enlist in the

military because of long term effects of childhood malnutrition. By 1975 breakfast was offered because of families with 2 working parents. During the 2020, COVID Crisis, CARES ACT funds were utilized to provide free school lunches to ALL public school students. Sadly the free lunch for all programs were not renewed by the Biden Administration and families are again paying for their children's school lunches. HB 1491 will reinstate Free Lunch for All.

In our state, public Awareness of student lunch debt increased after Fargo Public School had initiated a student debt policy that sent delinquent accounts to collection agencies. This stunning policy brought attention to the issue that families were unable to afford school lunches for their children.

Several advocacy groups across the state including the in Fargo the Lunch Aid group of musician and others, and Feed FM Kids,. In Grand Forks, there is a non profit group headed by 2 Female Hockey Gold Medal Olympians, in Minot a motorcycle group and in Bismarck a group of artists raised funds to pay off student lunch debt. Many other non profit organizations are engaged in the mission of assuring students can eat lunch. But Student Lunch debt is not merely an issue in the larger cities of the state, I often hear the stories of how in our rural schools, teachers or others have kicked in to assist students/families struggling with lunch debt.

While another bill specifically addresses "lunch debt shaming" when a child's lunch money account is depleted --a child would get a hand stamp or be offered a different lunch perhaps merely a sandwich or fruit rather than a hot lunch. HB 1491 will completely eliminate lunch debt shaming because ALL students would be provided with a no cost meal.

While the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program is available to lower the costs of school lunch or school breakfast for economically disadvantaged families. The 2022 income guidelines for free and reduced lunch are calculated at 130% and 185% of the poverty level. Households with an income of \$36,075 for a family of 4 would receive a free meal and households income of \$51,388 would receive a reduced meal at a reduced fee. For perspective, a person earning the state and federal minimum wage of \$7.25 has a yearly income of \$15,080. A person earning \$10.00 an hour has an annual income of \$20,800. And \$31,000 would be the annual income for a person earning \$15 per hour. These families would therefore qualify for free and reduced lunches if they had 2 school children. However the problem exists where families do not qualify according to the federal income guidelines -- 73% of ND families do not qualify and must pay for their children's school lunches. House Bill 1491 will provide for all ND families to be provided with a free school lunch.

The Fiscal note for HB 1491 indicates \$89.5 Million for the biennium to provide school meals to the 115,000 students attending North Dakota public schools. House Bill 1491 would not duplicate the FFRLP, the funding from FFRLP but would use the appropriation to provide lunches using money from the state General Fund. When I first introduced this legislation two years ago, it was developed to utilize funding from the state Legacy Fund. But because of the new guidelines for Legacy Fund usage we are not requesting moneys from that fund this year. Instead this legislation requests general fund money to be allocated.

I believe North Dakota's most essential legacy is our children and their education is our future. Therefore, let us invest in the children who are in our care while they are in our classrooms.

I have several people here today or who have submitted written testimony regarding the origins of this proposal, the need for this program, statistics on hunger and food insecurity of our school children, and economic issues facing families.

When I was younger, ND proudly called itself the bread basket of the world, now in 2023 let's be a state known for providing our school children FREE Lunches rather than just a sandwich if their family falls behind on their lunch money account.

LET' S DO LUNCH

I thank the committee for your consideration of House Bill 1491 and I stand for questions.

www.fns.usda.gov/cn/fr-030421#:~:text=Child%20Nutrition%20Programs%20Income%20Eligibility%20Guidelines%20%282021-2022%29%20This,School%20Program%29%2C%20School%20Breakfast%20Program%2C%20Special%20Milk%20

[School-Meals-State-Legislation-Chart.pdf \(frac.org\)](#)

[2021-04452.pdf \(govinfo.gov\)](#)



An official website of the United States government

Here's how you know

Amber Waves



USDA Economic Research Service (/)

MENU

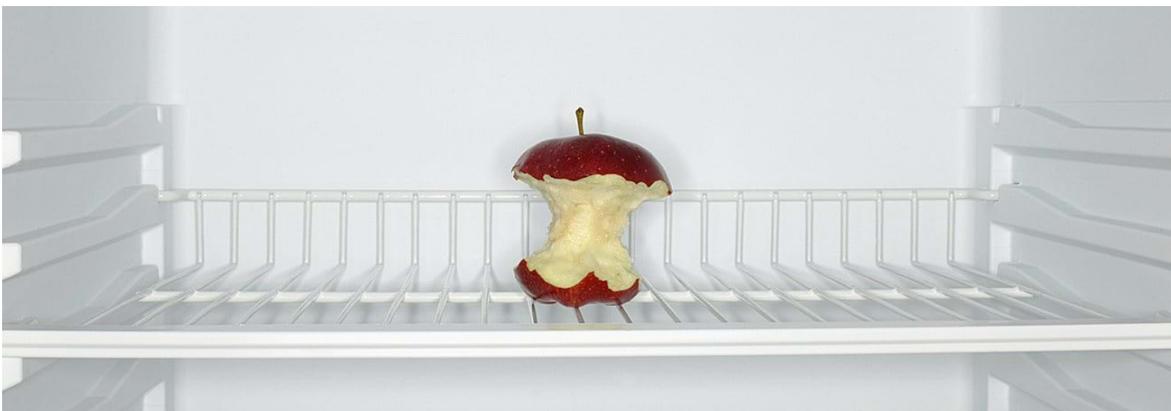
Amber Waves

Statistic: Food Security in the U.S.

February 07, 2022

Food Insecurity for Households With Children Rose in 2020, Disrupting Decade-long Decline

by [Laura Hales \(/authors/ers-staff-directory/laura-hales/\)](/authors/ers-staff-directory/laura-hales/) and [Alisha Coleman-Jensen \(/authors/ers-staff-directory/alisha-coleman-jensen/\)](/authors/ers-staff-directory/alisha-coleman-jensen/)

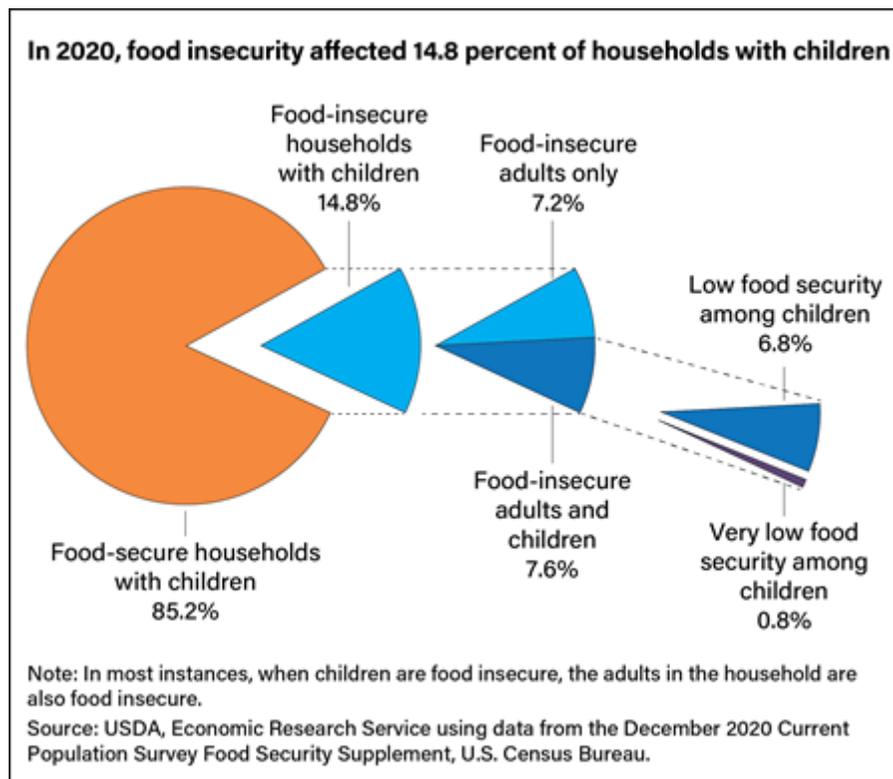


Food security is defined as having access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. USDA reported (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=102075>) that a lack of food security, or food insecurity, affected 10.5 percent of all U.S. households in 2020, unchanged from 2019. Households with children, however, experienced statistically significant increases in food insecurity during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, even as overall food insecurity stayed the same. In 2020, 85.2 percent of households with children were food secure, while 14.8 percent were food-insecure, up from 13.6 percent in 2019.

Annual Survey Measures Food Insecurity in Households With Children

Data from the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-security-in-the-united-states/>), sponsored by the USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS), can be used to characterize food insecurity in U.S. households. Each year, ERS provides information on the prevalence and severity of food insecurity in an annual report, *Household Food Security in the United States* (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/history-background/#annual>). ERS also publishes graphics, interactive data visualizations (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/interactive-charts-and-highlights/>), and a recorded webinar (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/multimedia/>) that are available on the ERS website.

For households with children, food insecurity is measured for the household overall as well as for adults and children separately. One adult respondent per household answers a series of 18 survey items (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement/#survey>) that ask about experiences and behaviors pertaining to food insecurity.



The food insecurity of households with children is measured by ERS in three ways:

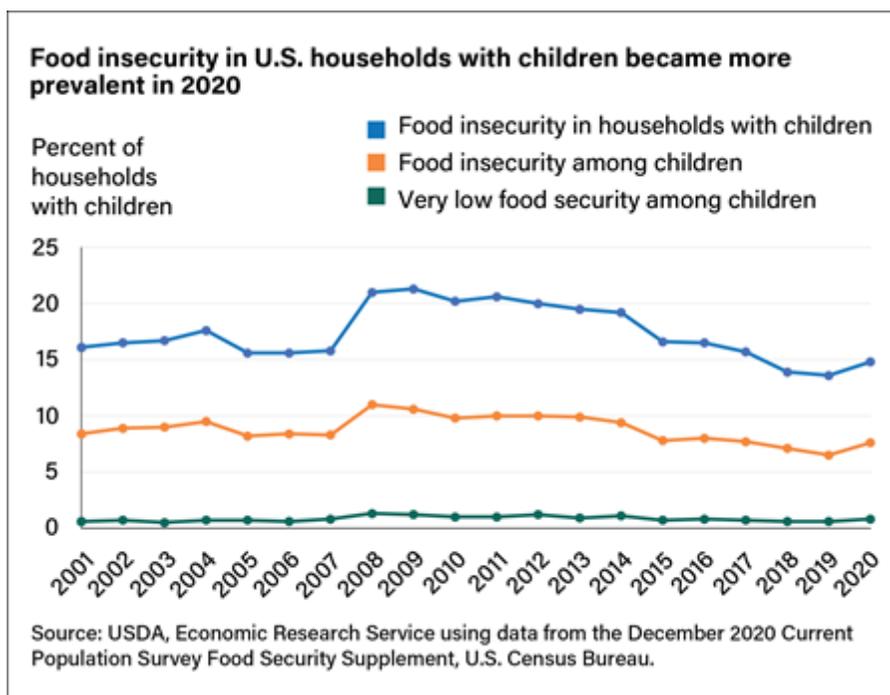
- food insecurity in households with children (adults, or children, or both are food insecure)
- food insecurity among children
- very low food security among children

Households are classified as food insecure if, at some time during the year, they had difficulty providing enough food for all their members because of a lack of resources. In households with children, food insecurity indicates at least one person in the household experienced reductions in dietary quality or variety and, in some cases, disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. However, household food insecurity may be experienced differently across household members. Among the 14.8 percent of households with children that reported food insecurity in 2020, about half reported food insecurity for only the adults in the household.

The second measurement, food insecurity among children, means both adults and children experienced food insecurity. Caregivers in this category report that they were unable to provide adequate, nutritious food for their children at times.

Some households report a more severe range of food insecurity, in which children were hungry, skipped a meal, or did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food. This situation is described as very low food security among children.

Food Insecurity Increased in All Measurement Categories for Households With Children in 2020



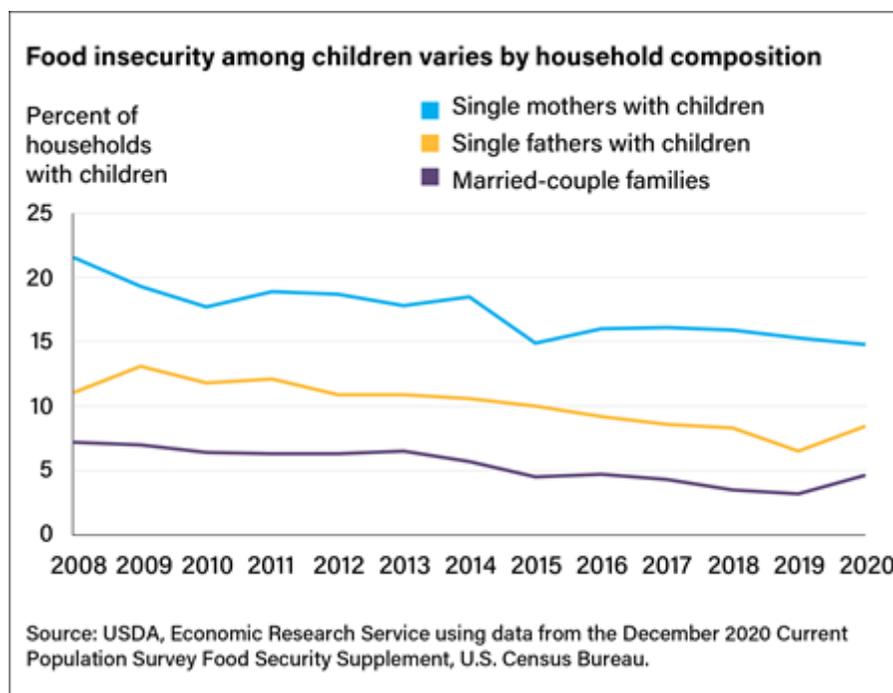
All three measurement categories of food insecurity for U.S. children experienced statistically significant increases in 2020. The percent of U.S. households with children that were food insecure reached 14.8 percent in 2020, or 5.6 million households, up from 13.6 percent in 2019. This increase in food insecurity in households with children was the first increase since 2011 and disrupted a decade-long downward trend.

The prevalence of food insecurity among children, in which both adults and children were food insecure, also increased significantly in 2020 to 7.6 percent. Food insecurity among children affected about 2.9 million households, which included about 6.1 million children, or about 8.4 percent of all U.S. children. The 2020 prevalence of food insecurity among children also interrupted a decline from a peak of 11.0 percent in 2008.

Finally, very low food security among children, the most severe range of food insecurity for children, increased significantly to 0.8 percent of households with children, up from 0.6 percent in 2019. Very low food security among children affected 322,000 households with children, which included about 584,000 children (0.8 percent of children).

Food Insecurity Varies by Household Composition

In 2020, married couples with children were the only household composition subgroup to experience a statistically significant increase in food insecurity among children. The prevalence of food insecurity among children in married-couple households with children increased to 4.6 percent from 3.2 percent in 2019. Despite this increase, the prevalence of food insecurity among children in married-couple households was still below the national average of food insecurity among children (7.6 percent in 2020).



Single mothers with children have historically had the highest levels of food insecurity compared to other household compositions. The change in the prevalence of food insecurity among children in single-mother households was not statistically different from 2019 to 2020. The prevalence of food insecurity among children in single-mother households with children in 2020 was 14.8 percent, which was significantly higher than for all households with children (7.6 percent). Single-mother households were more than three times as likely to

experience food insecurity among children than married-couple households with children. Among single fathers with children, the change in food insecurity among children from 2019 to 2020 was not statistically significant.

Some Racial and Ethnic Groups Saw Increases in Food Insecurity in 2020

A household is classified by the race and ethnicity of the household reference person. The reference person in the survey is an adult in the household in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented. Households with children headed by Hispanic reference persons not only saw statistically significant increases in food insecurity among children in 2020 but also experienced a significantly higher prevalence of food insecurity than those for all households with children. The prevalence of food insecurity among children in Hispanic households increased to 12.2 percent in 2020 from 7.8 percent in 2019.

The prevalence of household food insecurity increased significantly from 2019 to 2020 for households with children with Black, non-Hispanic reference persons. However, the change in the measure of food insecurity among children for these households with Black, non-Hispanic reference persons from 2019 to 2020 was not statistically significant. In 2020, food insecurity among children affected 13.0 percent of these households. The prevalence of food insecurity among children in Black, non-Hispanic households has, like single mother households, been historically higher than the prevalence for all households with children.

2022

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School Meals Legislation and Funding by State

Updated August 2022

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
Alabama	None	None	None
Alaska	None	None	None
Arizona	All K–8 schools are required to participate in the National School Lunch Program. A waiver may be granted for school districts with fewer than 100 students if the school board determines at a public meeting to not participate. The requirement does not apply to charter schools [ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-242].	None	None
Arkansas	All schools located in a school district with 20 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. [ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-18-705].	None	<p>School districts may use state education funding to the extent necessary to provide school meals without charge to all students in schools implementing Provision 2 and to provide school meals without charge to students otherwise eligible for reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program [ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-20-2305].</p> <p>School districts are prohibited from providing an alternate meal, preventing access to meals or snacks, or taking any action that would stigmatize a student that has unpaid meal fees. The Department of Education’s Child Nutrition Unit also is required to implement a system for reviewing local unpaid meal practices, provide model</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
			policies that local districts can adopt, and share best practices for implementation [ARK. CODE ANN. §6-18- 714]. HB 1356
California	<p>All public schools (including charter schools beginning in school year 2019–2020) are required to offer at least one meal (breakfast or lunch) on school days to all free and reduced-price certified students [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49550].</p> <p>All school districts (including charter schools) that have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) above 62.5 percent shall apply to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students by operating a federal universal meal service provision (Community Eligibility Provision, Provision 2). All school districts may use Medicaid data to directly certify students for free and reduced-price meals [CAL. EDUC. CODE §459564]. SB 138</p> <p>Beginning school year 2022-2023 California will instate the Universal School Meals program. All public school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools serving students in grades K-12 must provide breakfast and lunch to all students free of charge regardless of eligibility. AB 130 [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49501.5]</p>	<p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.2445 per free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch served in the 2020-2021 school year. The rate is adjusted annually for increases in cost of living. [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49430.5].</p> <p>The state offers grant funding to school sites with at least 20 percent free or reduced-price certified students, with an annual allocation of \$1.017 million. This competitive grant program awards up to \$15,000 per school site for non-recurring expenses incurred in initiating or expanding a School Breakfast Program or summer food program [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49550.3].</p> <p>Effective school year 2019–2020, the state will provide a state-matching grant to federal Equipment Assistance Grant awardees, up to \$100,000 [CAL. EDUC. CODE §49571].</p> <p>California-Grown Fresh School Meals Grant program provides up to \$2.5 million to School Food Authorities that use locally grown produce in school meals. AB 129</p> <p>California will provide \$54 million in state meal reimbursements for educational agencies offering universal breakfast and lunch to all students during the 2021-2022 fiscal year. \$3.9 million and 29.5 positions will be made available in the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 fiscal years for the</p>	<p>School districts are required to provide a reimbursable meal to all students, including those whose parent or guardian has unpaid school meal fees. School districts cannot shame or treat differently a student who has unpaid school meals fees. The unpaid meal policy must be publicly shared, and all communication concerning debt must be directed towards parents. Schools also are required to exhaust all options to directly certify students for free and reduced-price school meals, and cannot use debt collectors to collect fees. Under no circumstances can a school meal be denied to a child as a form of punishment. [CAL. EDUC.CODE §49557.5]</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
		workload related to the implementation of the universal school meals program. An estimated \$650 million of Prop 98 funding will be allocated to cover costs associated with the universal school meals program on an ongoing basis beginning in 2022-2023. Funds will also be provided for kitchen upgrades and training for food service employees. AB 128	
Colorado	All schools with 70 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast after the bell for free to all students [COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-82.8].	The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast in all schools [SB 18-013 , COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-82.7-104]. The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.40 for lunch for all pre-K–12 students [COLO. REV. STAT. §§ 22-82.9-104 to 105].	None
Connecticut	All K–8 schools in which 80 percent of lunches served are free or reduced-price are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. [CONN. GEN. STAT. Chap. 172, Sec. 10-266w].	Within available funds, the state provides an annual grant of \$2,894, and up to \$0.10 per breakfast served, to all schools in which 20 percent or more of lunches served in the second preceding school year were free or reduced-price [CONN. GEN. STAT. Chap. 172, Sec. 10-266w]. The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.10 per lunch served in the preceding school year to school districts that meet optional state nutrition standards [CONN. GEN. STAT. Chap. 169, Sec. 10-215b].	The state agency is required to administer, within available appropriations, an outreach program to increase participation in the federal School Breakfast Program and other child nutrition programs. The state agency must encourage schools to: participate in the School Breakfast Program, employ alternative breakfast service methods, and apply to the in-classroom breakfast grant program; and publicize the availability of other child nutrition programs [CONN. GEN. STAT. Chap. 169, Sec. 10-215h].
Delaware	All public schools, including charter schools, participating in the Community Eligibility Provision to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students must	The state supplements up to 70 percent of the salaries of school food service staff with funds not derived from local school lunch operations [14 Del. C. § 1322].	If a child who is eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch is unable to attend a charter school because it does not provide lunch, the school shall provide free lunch to the child [14

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	offer breakfast through an alternative service model, such as breakfast in the classroom or “grab and go,” in addition to traditional cafeteria service [14 Del. C. § 4137].		Del. C. § 506(f)].
District of Columbia	All public schools and public charter schools are required to offer free breakfast to all students. All schools with 40 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to implement breakfast in the classroom. Middle and high schools may use alternative service methods in addition to serving breakfast in the classroom. A waiver may be granted if the school’s breakfast participation rate exceeds 75 percent of average daily attendance without offering breakfast in the classroom [D.C. Code § 38-821.01 et seq. Sec. 203].	<p>The district provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.40 for lunch [D.C. Code § 38-821.01 et seq. Sec. 102].</p> <p>The district provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.20 per breakfast and lunch that meet the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act (including enhanced nutritional requirements). The district provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.05 per breakfast or lunch each day when at least one component is comprised of locally-grown, unprocessed foods in either breakfast or lunch [D.C. Code § 38-821.01 et seq. Sec. 102].</p> <p>Any public (traditional or charter) school implementing an approved alternative breakfast model will receive an annual subsidy of \$2 per student per year starting in school year 2020–2021 [D.C. Code § 38-821.01 et seq. Sec. 102].</p>	None
Florida	All public elementary schools are required to implement a School Breakfast Program. All schools with 80 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer free breakfast to all students. Schools may opt out of this requirement only after receiving public testimony concerning the proposed policy at two	Under the General Appropriations Act, the state allocates annual funding to supplement school breakfast programs. The funding is based on each school district’s number of free and reduced-price meals served [FLA. STAT. § 595.404].	All school districts are required to provide information about the School Breakfast Program prepared by the district’s school nutrition department annually to all students. The information must be communicated through school announcements and by written notice sent to all parents [FLA. STAT. § 595.405].

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	<p>or more regular school board meetings. Schools that implement the universal requirement must, to the maximum extent practicable, make breakfast meals available to students at an alternative site location outside of the cafeteria [FLA. STAT. § 595.405].</p>		
Georgia	<p>All K–8 schools with 25 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students, and all other schools with 40 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to establish and support a School Breakfast Program [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-66].</p> <p>All public schools must participate in the National School Lunch Program [GA State Bd. of Ed. Rule 160-5-6-01].</p>	<p>The state provides funding to offset labor costs, based on the number of full-time school nutrition staff [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-187].</p>	None
Hawaii	<p>School breakfast and lunch must be made available in every school where the students are required to eat lunch at school [HAW. REV. STAT. §302A-404].</p>	<p>State funds are budgeted to offset a portion of the cost to schools for breakfast and lunch.</p>	<p>School districts cannot deny meals to students with insufficient funds during the first 21 days of school. During the remainder of the school year, school districts also must provide a seven-day grace period to students that cannot pay for their school meals [HAW.REV. STAT. §302A-404].</p>
Idaho	None	<p>School nutrition employees' payroll tax costs are paid by the General Fund [IDAHO CODE § 33-1015].</p>	None
Illinois	<p>All schools with 70 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast after the bell</p>	<p>The state authorized an additional reimbursement of \$0.15 per free breakfast and lunch served. The amount appropriated has been reduced in recent years due to limited state</p>	<p>School districts are required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student, regardless of whether the student</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	<p>beginning in school year 2017–2018 [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. § 126/16].</p> <p>All public schools with 40 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students in the previous school year are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. School districts may opt out under certain circumstances [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. § 126/15].</p> <p>All public schools are required to operate a lunch program that provides free lunches (and free breakfasts if a school offers breakfast) to students certified for free meals [23 ILL. ADMIN. CODE § 305.10].</p>	<p>funding. Schools received \$0.04 per free meal served in school year 2018–2019 [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. §§ 125/2 and 125/6].</p>	<p>has the ability to pay for the meal or snack or owes money for prior meals or snacks. School districts cannot publicly identify or stigmatize a student who cannot pay for a meal or a snack or who owes money for a meal or snack [ILL. GEN Public Act 100- 1092].</p>
Indiana	<p>All public schools with 15 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program [IND. CODE §§ 20-26-9-2 and 13].</p>	None	None
Iowa	<p>All public schools are required to provide lunch that meets the nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program for students who attend public school four or more hours each school day and wish to participate [IOWA CODE § 283A.2].</p>	<p>The state appropriates funding to provide an additional reimbursement for each breakfast and lunch served between July 1 and May 31 of each school year. For school year 2018–2019, schools received approximately \$0.028 per meal.</p>	<p>Prohibits schools from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for a meal and encourages schools to provide a reimbursable meal [IOWA CODE §8A.504. 283A.11].</p>
Kansas	<p>All public schools are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. A waiver may be granted for schools with less than 35 percent free and reduced-price certified students [KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-5125].</p>	<p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.04 per lunch out of state revenue-match funds [KAN. STAT. ANN § 72-17,143].</p>	None

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
Kentucky	None	None	<p>All school districts are required to arrange bus schedules to arrive in sufficient time for schools to serve breakfast prior to the instructional day [KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070].</p> <p>Schools may not have physical segregation or other discrimination against any child because of inability to pay the full cost of a meal [702 KY. ADMIN. REG. § 6:050].</p>
Louisiana	<p>All public schools are required to provide a lunch program. All school districts with at least one school with 25 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program in all schools in the district. A waiver may be provided if it can be demonstrated with sufficient proof to the department of education that at least 50 percent of the free and reduced-price eligible students refuse to participate in the breakfast program [LA. STAT. ANN. §17:192].</p>	None	<p>If a public-school system has a policy of denying meals to children in elementary schools for non-payment of meal fees, the school board must implement procedures relative to denying meals. Prior to denying a meal, public elementary schools are required to notify the child's parent or legal guardian as to the date and time after which meals may be denied, the reason for such denial, any action needed to prevent further denial of meals, and the consequences of the failure to take appropriate actions to prevent such denial; and verify that the child does not have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that requires the child to receive school meals. The school must provide a substitute for the denied meal. School boards must report annually on the number of denied meals and students whose meals were denied [LA. STAT. ANN. §17:192.1].</p>
Maine	<p>All K–8 public schools are required to participate in NSLP [20-A ME. REV. STAT. ANN. § 6602].</p>	<p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 per breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch in public schools [20-A ME.</p>	<p>Requires schools to provide a reimbursable meal to any student who requests one, regardless of a student's ability to pay or</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	<p>All public schools with 50 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast after the bell. A waiver may be provided if the school board holds a public hearing regarding the service, and votes that the service would not be financially or logistically viable [20-A ME. REV. STAT. ANN. § 6602].</p>	<p>REV. STAT. ANN. § 6602].</p> <p>The State provides funding to pay the difference between the federal requirement for a free breakfast or lunch and the full price for each meal at no cost to students who are ineligible for free or reduced-price school meals. LD 1679 (This legislation passed in Maine’s state budget.)</p>	<p>accrued meal debt. Prohibits schools from punishing or stigmatizing students if they cannot pay for a meal [20-A ME. REV. STAT ANN. § 6681].</p> <p>The Local Food Fund was established to incentivize the use of locally produced foods in Maine schools. The fund matches \$1 for every \$3 that a school administrative unit pays for food grown or produced in Maine. LD 636</p> <p>A uniform online school meal application will be made available to all public schools in Maine. Schools may offer the online application for families to apply for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program. LD 961</p>
Maryland	<p>All public elementary schools are required to operate a free and reduced-price breakfast program. A waiver may be granted for schools with less than 15 percent free and reduced-price certified students [MD. EDUC. CODE. ANN. § 7-701 and 7-702].</p> <p>All public schools are required to operate a free and reduced-price lunch program [MD. EDUC. CODE. ANN. § 7-601].</p>	<p>The state provides funding for Maryland Meals for Achievement, a program that allows high-poverty schools to offer free breakfast after the bell to all students. Schools with at least 40 percent of students certified to receive free or reduced-price meals can apply to receive funding. Schools are reimbursed \$0.30 per reduced-price breakfast, and a formula determines the reimbursement per paid meal. The allocation for school year 2016–2017 was \$6.9 million [MD. EDUC. CODE. ANN. § 7-704].</p> <p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee for school breakfast and lunch over a four-year phase-in period, starting in school year 2019–2020. The state will increase its coverage of the fee by \$0.10 per student per year until the entire \$0.30 fee for breakfast and \$0.40 (and above) fee for lunch is completely</p>	None

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
		covered by 2022 [MD. EDUC. CODE. ANN § 7-602] .	
Massachusetts	<p>All public schools are required to make lunches available to children. All severe-need schools and those with more than 50 percent students certified for free and reduced-price meals in the preceding school year are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program [69 MASS. GEN. LAWS § 1C].</p> <p>All high-poverty K-12 Massachusetts public schools are required to offer breakfast after the instructional day begins. (H 4218)</p>	<p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.10 per breakfast to severe-need schools for free and reduced-price meals if breakfast costs exceed federal reimbursements. The per-meal rate is reassessed each March [69 MASS. GEN. LAWS § 1C].</p> <p>The state provides an additional per-breakfast reimbursement to elementary schools with at least 60 percent free and reduced-price certified students that offer breakfast free to all children. Payments are made twice per year based on funds available in the pool divided by the number of meals served.</p> <p>The state reimburses an additional \$0.06 of state funds per lunch.</p> <p>The state will provide funds to subsidize school meals, ensuring access to free school breakfast and lunch for all K-12 students regardless of household income during the 2022-2023 school year. [MA FY2023 Budget]</p>	Eligible schools and school districts must adopt the Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 to serve universal school meals to all students. Schools must inform families of accruing meal debt and may not shame, punish, or refuse meals to students with unresolved meal debt. [H 3999]
Michigan	All K–12 school districts are required to participate in the National School Lunch Program. All schools with 20 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students during the preceding school year are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. Other schools are not required to participate in the School Breakfast Program if, after annual public hearings on this issue, the board	The state provides funds to K–12 public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program to supplement federal reimbursements. These payments provide each district with up to 6.0127 percent of the necessary costs of operating the National School Lunch Program. Schools that are not required to provide school lunch are paid up to \$10 per eligible pupil plus \$0.05 for each free lunch and	As a part of 10 Cents a Meal for School Kids and Farms, a state-funded pilot project to support locally grown foods, the state provides matching grants up to an additional \$0.10 per meal for any Child Nutrition Program meal, which includes a Michigan-grown fruit, vegetable, or legume. The funding is available only for specific counties [HB 5579 Section 31j] .

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	<p>decides not to participate. School districts may apply for an exemption if a financial emergency exists [MICH. COMP. LAWS § 380.1272A-to-C].</p>	<p>\$0.02 for each reduced-price lunch provided [MI HB 5291, Sec. 31d. 2016].</p> <p>The state provides an additional reimbursement to cover the cost of providing breakfast. The payment is at a per-meal rate equal to the percent difference between a district's reported costs and revenues, up to the statewide average cost of a breakfast served [MICH. COMP. LAWS § 388.1631f].</p> <p>Michigan provides \$5 million in funding for the 10 Cents a Meal program. The program provides grantees with match incentive funding up to 10 cents per school meal to purchase and serve Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes. [MI HB4411, Sec 31j. 6]</p>	
Minnesota	<p>All public schools in which 33 percent or more of lunches served in the second preceding school year were free or reduced-price are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program [MINN. STAT. § 124D.117].</p>	<p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast. It provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.55 per paid breakfast served in grades 1–12. The state provides funding to offer free breakfast in kindergarten and all voluntary pre-kindergarten programs [MINN. STAT. §124D.1158].</p> <p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.40 for lunch, and an additional reimbursement of \$0.125 per free, reduced-price, or paid lunch served [MINN. STAT. § 124D.111].</p>	<p>Schools using NSLP must have a school meal debt policy that prohibits lunch shaming practices, posted on their website. Any student eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch must be served a reimbursable meal, and meals given to a student cannot be taken away, regardless of accrued debt. [MINN. STAT. § 124D.111].</p>
Mississippi	None	None	None

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
Missouri	All schools with 35 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students in the preceding school year are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. A waiver may be granted if a majority of the school board votes to opt out [MO. REV. STAT. § 191.803].	The state provides supplemental hardship grant funding for the School Breakfast Program, subject to appropriation. Any school that participates in the School Breakfast Program can apply, and grants are awarded to schools with the highest need [MO. REV. STAT. ANN. §191.805].	Agencies responsible for administering food programs, including the School Breakfast Program, are required to collaborate on designing and implementing culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach programs focused on populations at risk of hunger that effectively describe the programs, their purposes, and how to apply for them [MO. REV. STAT. § 191.813].
Montana	None	None	None
Nebraska	None	<p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.05 per breakfast served in the second preceding school year to public schools that also participate in the National School Lunch Program [NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-10,138].</p> <p>The state provides \$90,000 annually in state general funds for grants of up to \$15,000 to be used for nonrecurring expenses incurred in initiating or expanding services under the Summer Food Service Program. [NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-10, 141]</p>	None
Nevada	All schools with 70 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast after the bell. The state allocated \$2 million for start-up grants over the first two years of implementation to support schools executing breakfast after the bell programs [N.V. SB 503, 2015].	School meals will be provided at no cost to all students at schools operating under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program for the 2022-2023 school year.	None
New Hampshire	All schools are required to make a meal available during school hours to every student and are required to provide free and reduced-price meals to any “needy”	The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast [N.H. REV. STAT. § 189:11-A].	All schools must have a school meal charge policy that ensures all students have access to a healthy school lunch and are not treated differently in school meal practices.

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	<p>children. A waiver may be granted by the state school board, but the state is then directed to study and formulate a plan to implement the above requirement in those schools that have been granted waivers [N.H. REV. STAT. § 189:11-A].</p>		<p>Knowledge of the policy is to be shared and confirmed by all households [N.H. REV. STAT. § 189:11-A].</p>
<p>New Jersey</p>	<p>All schools with 70 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast after the bell starting in the 2019–2020 school year. Schools that had 70 percent of eligible students participate in the School Breakfast Program in the previous school year can receive a waiver. Each school district is required to submit a breakfast after the bell implementation plan to the state department of agriculture within six months of the effective date of the law. The state department of agriculture also is required to provide a list of available resources for school districts to help implement the program [S 1894].</p> <p>All schools with 20 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. A one-year waiver may be granted to schools that lack the staff, facilities, or equipment [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:33-10 to -12].</p>	<p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.055 per free or reduced-price lunch served and \$0.04 per paid lunch served in public and charter schools.</p> <p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee for breakfast and lunch. [N.J DOA. Form No. 163, Aug. 2019].</p>	<p>None</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	All schools with 5 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer a lunch program that meets USDA standards and provides free and reduced-price meals to those that qualify [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:33-4].		
New Mexico	All elementary schools with 85 percent or more free or reduced-price certified students during the prior school year are required to establish a breakfast after the bell program unless the school is granted a waiver [N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-13-13.2].	<p>The state department of education allocates approximately \$1.5 million to support participating breakfast after the bell schools. The funding for each district is determined by the dollars remaining after the school districts has been federally reimbursed [N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-13-13.2].</p> <p>Provide funding to each school district and charter school that administers a school breakfast or school lunch program to cover the cost of eliminating reduced price copayments. Funding will be based on a per-meal basis at the difference between the federal free meal rate and the reduced-price copayment rate. [HB 10]</p>	<p>School districts must always provide a reimbursable meal to children, regardless if they do not have the funds to pay for it. Students shall not be shamed or asked to work in the cafeteria. Schools are required to attempt to certify students with continuous debt for free or reduced-price meals through methods such as direct certification and school meal applications. All communication about debt must be held only between the school and the parents [SB 374]. [N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-3C-5]</p> <p>The New Mexico Public Education Department will create a working group to study food insecurity, food waste, academic benefits of proper nutrition and the repackaging of school meals for donations to students. [SM 10]</p>
New York	All elementary and secondary schools with 70 percent or more free or reduced-price certified students are required to establish a breakfast after the bell program at the beginning of the 2018–2019 school year. Allows time spent consuming breakfast in the classroom to be considered	<p>The state provides reimbursement of all expenses exceeding revenues in the first year of breakfast implementation in a public school [8 N.Y. CODES R. & REGS. § 114.1].</p> <p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.1013 per free breakfast, \$0.1566 per reduced-price breakfast, \$0.0023 per paid</p>	All schools that are not eligible to serve school meals through the Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 must develop a plan to ensure that a student with unpaid meal fees is not shamed or treated differently. The plan, required to be posted on the school’s website must include a statement that the school shall provide the

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	<p>instructional time. Provides one-time start up funds of \$7 million in state funding to help schools with implementation costs [8 N.Y. CODES R. & REGS. § 114.1].</p> <p>All public elementary schools that participate in NSLP, all public schools where 40 percent or more of the lunches served in the second preceding school year were free or reduced-price, and all school districts in cities with at least 125,000 inhabitants are required to participate in SBP. Schools and districts may apply for exemptions [8 N.Y. CODES R. & REGS. § 114.1].</p>	<p>breakfast, \$0.0599 per paid and free lunch, and \$0.1981 per reduced-price lunch served for school year 2018–2019.</p> <p>The state provides funding to eliminate the student’s reduced-price fee of \$0.25 for breakfast and lunch.</p>	<p>student with a reimbursable meal of choice if the student requests one, unless the student’s parent has specifically provided written permission to withhold a meal; an explanation of how staff will be trained to ensure procedures are carried out correctly, and how parents will be provided with assistance in establishing free or reduced-price eligibility; procedures requiring the school to notify the student’s parent that the student’s balance is exhausted and unpaid meal charges are due; a procedure to support eligible families enrolling in free and reduced-price meals without shaming the student [8 N.Y. CODES R. & REGS. § 114.5].</p>
North Carolina	<p>All public-school districts are required to provide school food services to the extent practicable [NC G.S. § 115C-263].</p> <p>Public schools are required to participate in the National School Lunch Program [NC G.S. § 115C-264].</p>	<p>The state uses a portion of the required state revenue match to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast.</p> <p>School lunches will be provided at no cost to students of all grade levels who qualify for reduced-price meals in all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program in the 2022-2023 school year. [HB 103 § 7.3]</p>	<p>The state board of education passed a resolution that breakfast may be included in the instructional day as long as appropriate educational activity is taking place while students are eating breakfast.</p>
North Dakota	None	The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast.	None
Ohio	All schools (including charter schools) with 20 percent or more students certified for free meals are required to participate in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Schools must establish a breakfast program when one half of the parents of children in the	In years that the state appropriates funds for this purpose, all schools subject to the School Breakfast Program are required to provide free breakfast to students who qualify for reduced-priced meals [OHIO REV. CODE § 3314.18].	None

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	school request one [OHIO REV. CODE § 3313.81.3 and 3314.18] .		
Oklahoma	None	None	State department of education policy prohibits school districts from withholding student records from households with schoolmeal debt.
Oregon	<p>All Title I schools and schools with 25 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program [OR. REV. STAT. §327.535].</p> <p>All schools with 70 percent or more free or reduced-price certified students are required to establish a breakfast after the bell program at the beginning of the 2020–2021 school year.</p>	<p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch [OR SB 695].</p> <p>Beginning July 1, 2020, the state will provide \$40 million in funding from the new Hunger-Free Schools Account to expand the number of schools providing free breakfast and lunch to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision and to increase the income eligibility for free meals to 300 percent of the poverty line at non-CEP schools. Will go into effect fall 2020 if the ballot referral is passed in January 2020 [HB 3427 §29-32].</p>	<p>Time spent by students consuming breakfast in the classroom while instruction is being provided is considered instructional time, up to 15 minutes [OR. REV. STAT. §327.535].</p> <p>School districts must provide a child a federally reimbursable meal, regardless if they have the funds to pay for it. Students with school meal debt cannot be publicly identified, shamed, or forced to work in the cafeteria in exchange for school meals. The school district must attempt to directly certify students with school meal debt, and encourage the completion of a school meal application for households that are not certified for free or reduced-price meals. All communication concerning school meal debt must be directed towards parents [HB 3454].</p>
Pennsylvania	None	The state provides an additional reimbursement of no less than \$0.10 per breakfast or lunch served. Schools that participate in NSLP and SBP receive an additional \$0.02 (\$0.12 total) per lunch, and schools with more than 20 percent of their student enrollment participating in school breakfast receive an additional \$0.04 (\$0.14 total) per lunch [22 PA. CONSOL. STAT. § 13-1337.1] .	School districts must provide a child a meal, regardless if they have the funds to pay for it, unless the student's parent has provided written directive to withhold a school meal. Students with unpaid school meal fees cannot be publicly identified, shamed, or forced to work in the cafeteria in exchange for school meals. When a student owes money for five or more meals, the school district must make at least two attempts to reach the student's parents and encourage the completion of a

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			school meal application for households that are not certified for free or reduced-price meals. All communication concerning school meal debt must be directed towards parents. Schools may restrict privileges or activities of students who owe money for school meals if those same restrictions apply to students who owe money for other school-related purpose [22 PA. CONSOL. STAT. § 13-1337.2].
Rhode Island	All public schools are required to operate a school breakfast and lunch program [R.I. GEN. LAWS §§ 16-8-10 to 10.1].	The state provides an additional reimbursement per breakfast served, which is distributed based on each district's proportion of the number of breakfasts served in the prior school year relative to the statewide total in the same year. For school year 2017–2018, the state provided schools with an additional \$0.047 per breakfast served.	All public schools are prohibited from stigmatizing child that are unable to pay for meals [R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-8-10.2].
South Carolina	All public schools are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program. A waiver may be granted by the state board of education if the school lacks necessary equipment or facilities, if the program is not cost-effective, or if implementation creates substantial scheduling difficulties [S.C. CODE ANN. §§ 59-63-790 and 59-63-800].	None	School districts are required to directly certify students eligible for free and reduced-price school meals to the extent permitted under federal law. School districts in which all schools are eligible to receive the free federal reimbursement rate under the Community Eligibility Provision are required to participate in community eligibility. If a district is unable to participate, the school board must adopt a resolution stating why it is unable to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision. The resolution shall be published on a public meeting agenda concurrently with the proposed district budget as an action item and shall be approved by a majority of the board. School districts shall ensure that parents or guardians of students eligible for free and

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
			reduced-price school meals receive the necessary application and instructions and upon request are provided with assistance in completing the paperwork. Schools are not allowed to publicly identify a student who is unable to pay for a meal for any reason. Communications from the district regarding any school meal debt must be directed to only the parent or guardian but can be sent home through the student.
South Dakota	None	None	None
Tennessee	All schools are required to operate a school lunch program. All K–8 schools in which 25 percent or more of the students, and all other schools in which 40 percent or more of the students received a free or reduced-price lunch are required to participate in SBP [TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-2302].	None	None
Texas	<p>All public schools and open enrollment charter schools with 10 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program. Schools have the option to offer a breakfast program that is not under the School Breakfast Program if the school district is granted a waiver by the commissioner.</p> <p>All schools with 80 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to offer breakfast free to all</p>	None	School districts must provide a grace period for students with insufficient funds to continue receiving school meals. School districts cannot charge households for school meals that are provided during the grace period, but are required to notify parents concerning the school meal debt [SB 1566, TEX EDUC. CODE § 11.151].

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	students [TEX EDUC. CODE ANN. § 33.901] .		
Utah	None	The state provides public schools with an additional per meal reimbursement for lunch from the proceeds of a state liquor tax.	<p>Local school boards are required to review the reasons for a school’s nonparticipation in SBP at least every three years. After two reviews, a local school board may, by majority vote, waive any further reviews of the nonparticipating school [UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-9-205].</p> <p>HB 16 amends specific provisions regarding the use of school meal revenue and sets reporting requirements for the School Breakfast Program. The bill requires an annual review of participation in the school breakfast program.</p> <p>HB 222 creates the Smart Start Breakfast Program to expand access to school breakfast in public schools. This new law creates an alternative breakfast service model and requires the state board of education to specify waivers for non-participation. The phase-in period has been delayed until the 2023-2024 school year.</p>
Vermont	All public schools are required to participate in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. In the event of an emergency, a waiver may be granted by the commissioner for up to 20 school days [16 VT. STAT. ANN. § 1264] . School boards may vote to exempt districts from these requirements for up	<p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch [16 VT. STAT. ANN. § 1264].</p> <p>The Universal School Meals Act extends free breakfasts and lunches for all public school students for the 2022-23 school year. It requires data collection to be used in determining how to make the program permanent. S. 100</p>	None

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
	to one year [16 VT. STAT. ANN. § 1265].		
Virginia	<p>All public schools with 25 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students during the previous school year are required to participate in the School Breakfast Program [VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-207.3].</p> <p>Virginia requires that all schools eligible for the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) apply to participate. Waivers may be issued to schools for whom the provision would not be financially viable. [VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-207.4:1]</p> <p>Beginning July 2022, all schools with at least 50 percent or more free or reduced-price certified students during the previous school year are required to participate in the federal Afterschool Meal Program. [VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-207.4:2]</p>	<p>The state provides funding for an incentive program to increase School Breakfast Program participation. Funds are available to any school district as a per-meal reimbursement for each breakfast served in excess of the participation baseline set in school year 2003–2004. Schools annually receive \$0.22 per additional breakfast served over the baseline participation rate.</p> <p>Elementary schools with 45 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are eligible to apply for an additional \$0.05 per breakfast served if implementing a breakfast model that will increase school breakfast participation. Middle and high schools are eligible to apply for an additional \$0.10 per breakfast served for fiscal year 2019.</p> <p>The state will provide funds to eliminate the cost of school meals for students who are eligible for reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. [HB30 § 38]</p>	<p>Requires each local school board to adopt policies that prohibit employees from making a student who cannot pay for a meal at school or has unpaid meal fees to do chores or other work to pay for such meals, or wear a wristband or hand stamp; and to direct any communication relating to a school meal debt to the student's parent [VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-79.7].</p> <p>Requires school districts that collect information to determine free and reduced-price meals eligibility to establish and post prominently on its website a web-based application (that complies with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's web-based prototype application) for student participation, as well as provide a paper- based application to students [VA. CODE ANN § 22.1-207.2:2].</p> <p>Prohibits punishments for students who cannot pay for a meal at school or who owe school meal debt. Requires school board employees to communicate issues regarding school meal debt to the student's parents. Prohibits school boards from filing lawsuits against a student or their parent related to inability to pay for school meals or meal debt. Permits acceptance of donations used to eliminate or offset unpaid school meal debt. [VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-79.7]</p>

State	State Mandate Requiring Some or All Schools to Offer School Breakfast and/or Lunch	States Providing Additional Funding for School Meal Programs	Other legislation addressing issues such as unpaid school meal fees, outreach programs and incentives for locally grown food
Washington	<p>All schools with 70 percent or more free or reduced-price certified students are required to establish a breakfast after the bell program in the 2019–2020 school year. Allows time spent consuming breakfast in the classroom to be considered instructional time if students are engaged in an educational activity. Provided \$1.2 million in one-time state funding to help schools with initial implementation costs [H.B. 1508].</p> <p>All public schools with 25 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to operate NSLP for all K–4 students. All public schools with 40 percent or more free and reduced-price certified students are required to participate in SBP [WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.235.160].</p> <p>HB 2660 increases the availability of school meals provided to public school students at no student cost. In 2020–2021, each school with a school lunch program and school breakfast program must make school meals available to all students at no charge if the school or district has an identified student percentage of at least 40% or 70% of the students of the school or school district qualify for free or reduced price meals. [HB 2660]. HB 1878 extended the</p>	<p>The state provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.40 for lunch for K–3 public school students and to eliminate the reduced-price fee of \$0.30 per breakfast in K–12 public schools.</p> <p>The state provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.17 per free and reduced-price breakfast served in school year 2018–2019 [WASH. REV. CODE §4198-01].</p> <p>The state provides annual grant funds for schools administered by OSPI to increase participation in school breakfast. Allowable uses of the grant include improving meal quality and food choices; improving equipment and meal facilities; outreach and engagement to students and families. [WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.235.150].</p>	<p>No school or school district personnel or volunteer may take any action that would publicly identify a student who cannot pay for a school meal; require a student who cannot pay for a school meal to perform chores or other actions in exchange for a meal, or require a student to dispose of a meal served to them; or require a parent or guardian to pay fees or costs in excess of the amounts owed for meals. . [WASH. REV CODE § 28A.235.270] (HB 2610, 2018)</p> <p>The office of the superintendent of public instruction will establish an electronic option for the submission of household income information required for participation in school meal programs. The electronic application will provide parents and legal guardians of students a voluntary, secure, and convenient online portal to report their information. [HB 1833]</p>

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	<p>mandate to all CEP-eligible schools and ensures that states pay the difference in the reimbursement for schools with ISPs between 40-62.5%</p> <p>Public schools with an identified student percentage of at least 40% must participate in the USDA’s community eligibility provision, making school meals available to all students at no charge regardless of individual eligibility. HB 1878</p>		
West Virginia	<p>All schools are required to operate a school breakfast and lunch program. Beginning in school year 2015–2016, all schools are required to adopt a delivery system approved by the state agency that ensures all students are given an adequate opportunity to eat breakfast, including but not limited to, “grab and go,” breakfast in the classroom, or breakfast after the bell [W. VA. CODE §§ 18-5D-1 to 5].</p>	<p>Public-private partnerships will be developed to help cover additional costs for schools to offer free breakfast and/or lunch to all students. The state agency will create a nonprofit foundation to help county boards of education raise funds to cover the cost [W. VA. CODE §§ 18-5D-1 to 5].</p>	<p>The board of education requires that students be afforded at least 10 minutes to eat after receiving their breakfast and 20 minutes after receiving lunch [W. VA. C.S.R. § 126-86-9].</p> <p>All county boards of education must establish a program to assist and encourage schools to participate in the “Shared Table” initiative, which collects unused foods for appropriate redistribution [W. VA. CODE §§18-5D-5].</p>
Wisconsin	None	<p>The state provides an additional per meal reimbursement of \$0.15 for both lunch and breakfast. If the state appropriation is insufficient, these payments may be prorated. For school year 2018–2019, the state provides \$0.0491 per lunch served and \$0.08137 per breakfast served [WIS. STAT. §115.341].</p>	None
Wyoming	None	None	None

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Good afternoon, Chairman Hager and Education Committee,

My name is Jeremy Maher; I'm from Sioux Co ND, District 31. I'm here today to testify for my support for HB1491 but would like to see some amendments. I would like to include 25 percent of the state's fund for school lunches to be used for purchasing local products such as beef, potatoes, flour, and honey. This would be a win for our children, our schools, and for our ag producers, to keep our tax dollars in the state. We can then source the commodities we can't raise or grow through the federal dollars and keep a portion of the state dollars in our communities. I truly believe with your support we can make the school lunch program better.

I urge you to amend and pass HB 1491.

I'll stand for questions.

701-522-3696 home
605-314-4760 cell

North Dakota Legislative Committee

I am a working mother in Watford City, North Dakota. I am writing in support of the bill to provide free meals at schools in North Dakota.

Prior to the pandemic, I would not have supported this bill. I like others thought that the current lunch program for free or reduced lunches was enough.

I was a child of free and reduced lunches. I remember feeling embarrassed by the different color card that meant I received free lunches. I also worked in the kitchen when my parents did not qualify for free lunches only reduced lunches.

When the pandemic hit and the lunches were free to all, I thought “what a waste of government money. I can afford to pay for my children’s lunches. There must be better ways to spend this money.”

What I found in those two years, the free lunches were a blessing to parents. It was one less thing I had to worry about or make sure that my child was being fed during the day at school. I did not have to make sure I had lunch items in the house. I did not have to spend time on making lunches. It took one of my million to do’s off my plate.

Thank you for considering this bill. Please vote yes and support this bill until it is passed for all North Dakota parents.

Katie Barber

Watford City, North Dakota

barberkatie@gmail.com

406-670-9565

**Testimony of Landis Larson, ND AFL-CIO President
In Support of HB 1491
January 30, 2023**

Chairperson Heinert and members of House Education:

My name is Landis Larson, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO. The North Dakota AFL-CIO is the federation of labor unions in North Dakota, representing the interests of all working people in our state.

I am testifying on behalf of the North Dakota AFL-CIO in support of House Bill 1491.

We are here today because we know what a huge relief it was for working families to not worry about school meals while federal funding was covering it. Providing a basic hot meal for every kid who needed one, at no charge to the student or families, worked for everyone. It became normal. The problems we had around school meals, including things like meal shaming, and school meal debt, faded into the rearview mirror of things any of us had to worry about.

We are now back to school-meals-as-usual, and once again, it's really challenging for everyone involved: students, parents, grandparents, cafeteria workers, teachers, school administrators, school boards, and community groups. For working families, the end of this popular program and this was an unexpected financial jolt. With increased food prices, this has been difficult to fit back into family budgets, especially those with multiple children in school.

Investing in school meals is one of the best investments in our legacy and our future. North Dakota has an incredible opportunity to be a leader on school meals policy. Not only do we support House Bill 1491, but we suggest that it be amended to also include breakfast for all public school students at no charge. There is plenty of evidence that breakfast is also a great investment in our students.

Making sure our kids have access to all the tools they need to be successful while they are at school, including proper nutrition, just makes sense. The North Dakota AFL-CIO fully supports House Bill 1491.

Hi, my name is Kia Seidlinger, I am a parent who currently has a child in enrolled in the Grand Forks school district as well as an educator currently working in Head Start.

I feel free lunches should be funded to every child enrolled in school. When the school districts looks at a parent's/parents' income they look at gross pay not net pay. For many families the difference between gross pay and net pay differers greatly. The difference could be due to many things such as the families health, vision and dental insurance being deducted from the parent's paycheck as well as garnishments, child support, and of course all the tax deductions. Therefore a parent's/parents' net pay is significantly less than then their gross pay. Which also means a family may fall below the poverty line once all deductions are taken out of paychecks. The cost of living has gone up immensely. By the time bills are paid for the household many families are are in the negative. Many families can not afford school lunches everyday. It is not fair to the child they do not get to eat because their parents can not afford it.

Food is one of the basic needs of any human being. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, physiology needs is at the base of the pyramid. Physiology needs includes FOOD, water, sleep, and shelter. Why should children or any human be denied food? Many children who do not have money in their lunch accounts to eat do not eat at all that day. In some of public schools the child may be given a sandwich and a milk if they do not have money in their lunch account. What child wants to be singled out that they do not have money for lunch? If a child does not have money in their account they are not provided breakfast if any kind. For many children, the school meals may be the only nutritional meals they receive in a day.

A child being singled out for not having money to eat only hurts their self esteem and causes more issues and feeling of being different than they were already feeling. Our children have enough stress and anxiety, why add to it? Children's academic performance, social regulation, and over all behavior is improved when provided nutritional food. As adults, it is our job to help the children not cause more stress and anxiety.

Thank you for considering to vote in favor of HB 1491 and HB 1494.



NORTH DAKOTA STATE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

2901 Twin City Dr. Suite 201
Mandan, North Dakota 58554
(701) 663-8821

© SCRU 280-C

January 30, 2023

To the Honorable Pat Heinert and Representatives of House Education Committee:

Representing workers in the commercial, industrial, and residential construction industries, foundation to finish, we are committed to promoting, recruiting, developing, and advocating for careers in the skilled trades. We support House Bill 1491 to provide grants to school districts to provide lunch for all students in North Dakota.

We are invested in educating young people that choose the building trades through our apprenticeship education programs. Having proper nutrition is essential to being a dedicated, motivated learner in an apprentice's education.

Conversely, students in our public schools need to have proper nutrition in order to perform at their best to reach their full potential. One of the best ways to invest in our future apprentices is to ensure their nutrition while in school.

Therefore, the North Dakota State Building and Construction Trades Council urges a Do Pass on House Bill 1491 from the House Education Committee.

Sincerely, I am

Jason Ehlert
President

Testimony In Support of HB 1491

Karen K. Ehrens, RD, LRD
Bismarck
January 30, 2023

Chair Heinert and Members of the Education Committee:

Please allow yourselves the chance to see a new and better way of supporting children and education in North Dakota. You have the power to change the school day for every student in our schools! With a “Do pass” recommendation, you can make happen this new vision:

Each of the young people who enters a school gets what they need to support learning: desks, books, computers, a bus ride, and breakfast & lunch.

Experience and research have shown that nourishing food is essential to learning and as an integral part of the school day for all children. Children who do not have food security (food insecurity) are at least twice as likely to report being in fair or poor health. Food insecurity in children is associated with poor educational performance and academic outcomes and with challenges in mental health and behavioral health.¹ Food at school served at lunch, breakfast, and/or healthful snacks is a vital source of healthful food for North Dakota’s children.

Creative solutions are welcomed and needed to ensure that the most vulnerable among us, our children, have enough to eat now and into the future. Ensuring that all the children in our care in the state of North Dakota have enough to eat is a basic minimum that should and can be provided. Schools can continue to be trusted and available partners to get food to children when they have adequate support for the people and resources needed to provide vital school meals: food service personnel with adequate equipment and wages; food to serve, equipment to store, prepare and serve food during school the school day; and the ability to cover the expenses for doing so.

Healthy School Meals for All, or meals as an integrated part of the school day not singled out with a separate fee for families, can bring many benefits to students, schools, and our society. Food for school children is an worthy investment with dividends of healthier children with improved learning. Please give this bill a “Do pass” recommendation and vote for it on the floor of the House. **North Dakota families now and in the future will thank you for it.**

Reference:

1. *The Impact of Poverty, Food Insecurity, and Poor Nutrition on Health and Well-Being*, Food Research & Action Center, 2017. Accessed at <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/hunger-health-impact-poverty-food-insecurity-health-well-being.pdf>

Dear Chair Heinert and members of the House Education Committee,

My testimony is in favor of House Bill 1491. I ask that you give this bill a Do Pass.

As a child I grew up in North Dakota and Minnesota rural schools. While I don't know the circumstances or how they came about, I was made to help serve with lunch maids for my fellow students. It was only after I helped serve every other child, that I was able to be served and sit down to eat. I had much less time than my fellow students and had to eat very quickly before being pulled back into class.

I don't know if this kind of practice still occurs, but I hear stories from time to time about kids being shamed or penalized for not being able to afford lunch. And I'm sure some rural schools may get more creative than other places in how they handle poor students. I think this bill will garner quite a lot of favorable testimony and the question we have to ask ourselves as a state will be if the funding is warranted.

As someone who works in suicide prevention and as an advocate for youth, I'm not sure there is a better place to spend money than on keeping our youth fed. Within the work of suicide prevention food insecurity can be a driven component, but the health and developmental factors associated with a lack of nutrition or social shaming cannot be overstated.

There are two things I'd like to bring up as a suicide prevention advocate within this discussion: Accessibility and Opportunity. I know our state and the people in it do not have the funds to support the needs of all of our youth to the extent we wish we could. That we must make difficult decisions and compromises. Within suicide prevention work, we are often working within several limitations. We don't always have the support someone needs, but what we want to offer isn't everything, it is *something*.

When we consider this bill and as we think about and make amendments to it within a financial lens, please consider how we can at least stop some of the worst harm. That kids have some opportunity to be fed decent meals. Further that this opportunity is not so difficult to access, that it becomes impractical.

What I would personally love is if our youth simply did not have to think about this at all. That them getting food is a matter of course, rather than a complicated battle. That we don't need creative solutions like kids working with the lunch maids.

It is for these reasons I urge you to consider voting Do Pass. Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Best regards,
Faye Seidler



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony Before the House Education Committee
HB 1491
January 30, 2023**

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, I am Nick Archuleta, North Dakota United president, and I am happy to appear before you today to urge a ***do pass*** recommendation for HB 1491.

Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief in my testimony. I just want to point out that HB 1491 is one of those rare pieces of proposed legislation that makes so much sense, it is hard to believe that it is not already law. I will boil it down to this: we do not charge families for their children to use district owned Chromebooks, iPads, text books, computer labs, or to participate in field experiences. Why? Because we realize that these are important educational components which are vital to ensuring meaningful educational experiences for our students. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the same is true of a nutritious and satisfying lunch. Given that we have a compulsory attendance law in North Dakota, isn't it logical that we provide a nutritional lunch while these children are in our charge? At ND United, we believe that the state that mandates attendance should also cover the cost of school lunches for all children.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I conclude my remarks and urge a ***do pass*** recommendation for HB 1491.



North Dakota House of Representatives

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#17746



Representative Zachary Ista

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COMMITTEES:
Finance and Taxation
Energy and Natural Resources

January 30, 2023

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Education Committee:

For the record, Zac Ista, from District 43 in Grand Forks.

I am thrilled to stand in support of a simple but powerful statement of our North Dakota values: that all students across our state should receive healthy, nutritious school meals at no cost to their families. I am grateful to Rep. Hager for her efforts in bringing this bill forward and for all the work she's done for many years to elevate this issue to the forefront. I will keep my comments brief so that you can hear from the many, many advocates behind me who will share just how important healthy meals for all are and why it's time for North Dakota to provide them to students everywhere throughout our great state.

We know that ensuring all students have equal access to nutritious meals is one of the best ways to promote their educational and emotional development, reduce behavioral problems in the classroom, and increase positive academic outcomes in our schools. We also know that over a quarter of all North Dakota schoolchildren qualify for free or reduced-price meals, but thousands more families hover just above the household income limits for this federal program. For those families, the stress of affording school meals (sometimes for multiple children in the home) causes real anxiety and meaningful strain on household budgets, especially during this period of rising costs.

With this bill, we have an opportunity to provide real, substantial relief to these families by establishing our own North Dakota no-cost school meals program. In doing so, we would join Maine, Colorado, California, Vermont, Nevada, and Massachusetts in extending no-cost meals to all students. With our current strong fiscal outlook, it's an investment we can and should make. With our current workforce challenges, it's an investment that can and will encourage more families to make North Dakota their home.

While I strongly believe that moving North Dakota to no-cost school meals is the right policy, I appreciate the many challenges that could arise in making it a reality. Beyond the cost, there will be administrative burdens. New forms may need to be created, new rules crafted, and new policies written. It seems daunting, for sure. But I ask this committee not to let these challenges be a reason to say no. Every potential question has an answer; every potential problem has a solution. And I'm happy to do my best to explore those answers and solutions with this Committee. We also have countless advocates and subject matter experts both in the public and private sectors ready to help. Whether it's working through amendments with this Committee, advancing the bill to the Appropriations Committee for further work, partnering with our colleagues in the Senate to hone this legislation, or empowering the Department of Public Instruction and local districts to implement our legislative priorities, we have ample opportunities to perfect this policy and have no-cost school meals for every North Dakota student as early as the 2023-24 academic year.

That's why, at bottom, I encourage this Committee to advance a bill that makes it our state's policy 1) to provide meals to all school children, 2) to make those meals no-cost to all North Dakota families, and 3) to maximize the amount of federal funds (and other private and public dollars) we receive to offset the financial cost to our state. I am ready to actively help this Committee and this Assembly make it happen. Thank you for your time and consideration of this hugely important bill. I urge a DO PASS of HB 1491, and I stand ready to answer any questions you might have.

Testimony In Support of HB 1491

Kara L. Geiger
Mandan, ND

Chair Heinert and Members of the Education Committee,

Please vote "Do Pass" on HB 1491 to ensure that all children are fed during the school day. Kids need nourishment in order to do well in school, but we all know that too many come from families with food insecurity. Yes, these families can currently apply for free or reduced lunch each year, but that puts an unnecessary (in my opinion) burden on families that are already struggling and punishes children whose parents or guardians did not or could not fill out the paperwork for whatever reason. By providing ALL kids with free lunch, no one is singled out because they can't afford to pay.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB 1491 written testimony
Melissa Sobolik
CEO, Great Plains Food Bank

As the state's largest hunger-relief organization and its only food bank, the Great Plains Food Bank gives its full support and strongly urges the committee to recommend passage of House Bill 1491 to ensure all kids have access to a healthy school lunch. With this bill, we have an opportunity to take impactful steps toward ending childhood hunger throughout our state.

We believe that when you feed a child, you feed the future. Last year, more than 47,000 North Dakota children were served through the Great Plains Food Bank and our network of charitable hunger relief programs. Our trio of childhood hunger-relief programs – backpack program, school pantry program and youth summer meals program – along with our network of 200 partner food pantries across the state are feeding kids every day while they are home. But this does nothing to feed them while they are in school when they are trying to learn and to grow.

In 2022, we served the second largest number of individuals of any year in our organization's 40-year history and served more than any year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This equates to nearly 140,000 individuals (1 in 6 North Dakotans) that sought food assistance last year alone. With the high cost of food and inflation, every day we witness the strain families are under and being able to provide them a school meal would be an immediate boost for so many.

Daily we hear from teachers, administrators, and counselors that hunger among school-aged children continues to be an issue. We, at the Great Plains Food Bank have a responsibility to keep our children fed, but we can't do it alone. The only way we will eradicate childhood hunger is, together, with public, private, and nonprofit entities working alongside each other.

Opponents will ask if we can afford to feed our kids. I ask, "can we afford not to?"

Thank you for your consideration and support of HB 1491.



HB 1491
House Education Committee
January 30, 2023 | 3:00 pm

Good afternoon, Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Elizabeth Pihlaja and I am the Operations Director of the Foundation for a Healthy North Dakota. I am providing written testimony on behalf of the Foundation in support of HB 1491.

This bill would allocate general fund dollars to schools in order to defray the expenses of providing free lunches to children who attend public schools in North Dakota.

The Foundation for a Healthy North Dakota believes that no child should go hungry because an adult in their life cannot afford school meals. While there are federal programs to cover or offset parents' school meal costs, there are many families that do not qualify for assistance but still struggle with these expenses – especially with rising food prices. We see children falling through the cracks in North Dakota, where 1 in 12 children face hunger and nearly half of North Dakota households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) support include children.¹

The research is clear: Access to meals in school helps children thrive. We know that improved access to free meals in school buffer food insecurity, improve dietary intake and diet quality, reduce childhood obesity, and improve school outcomes, including ameliorating behavioral issues, increasing student test scores, and reducing absenteeism.²

The best way to keep North Dakota legendary is to ensure our kids get a legendary start in life. HB 1491 establishes a strong foundation for strong and healthy North Dakotans. Because of this, the Foundation for a Healthy North Dakota urges a “yes” vote on HB 1491.

Thank you for your time.

References

1. Feeding America. (2023). *Hunger in North Dakota*. Retrieved January 29, 2023, from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/north-dakota>.
2. Food Research and Action Center. (n.d.). *Benefits of school lunch*. Retrieved January 29, 2023 from <https://frac.org/programs/national-school-lunch-program/benefits-school-lunch>.



Contact:
Matt Perdue, Lobbyist
mperdue@ndfu.org | 701.641.3303

**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Before the
House Education Committee
January 30, 2023**

Chairman Heinert and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill No. 1491. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members. NDFU supports HB 1491, which would ensure all students enrolled in public schools can receive a free lunch.

NDFU's member-driven Policy & Action states "we support free school breakfasts and lunch for every child." Our members are proud of their work to provide food, fiber and fuel for our country and world. We feel a strong obligation to connect the food we produce to hungry people, especially those in our own communities. HB 1491 is an important step toward meeting that obligation.

We respectfully request a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1491. Thank you.

Please give HB 1491 a "do pass" recommendation.



1200 18th Street, NW | Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
202-986-2200
frac.org

Testimony to House Education Committee in Support of HB 1491 and HB 1494
Alexis Bylander, Senior Policy Analyst at the Food Research & Action Center
January 30, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity for the Food Research & Action Center to submit testimony in support of HB 1491 and HB 1494, which strengthen the school meal programs in North Dakota and support students with good nutrition as they make the most of their time at school.

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is the leading national nonprofit organization working to improve public policies and public-private partnerships to eradicate hunger and undernutrition in the United States. FRAC has worked for decades to improve and strengthen the federal School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs through federal and state legislation. We work extensively with federal, state, and local government agencies, schools, private nonprofit organizations and other stakeholders to ensure that the programs reach the children who need them.

States across the country are recognizing the importance of free school meals for all students and passing legislation. California, Maine and Colorado have passed permanent School Meals for All policies. Vermont and Massachusetts have established free school meals for all students for the 2022-2023 school year and Nevada has created free school meals for all students for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. Many additional states are currently considering similar legislation.

The National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program are the two largest child nutrition programs in the United States. Students are in school approximately 180 days a year and many students participate in school-based before and after school care and summer programming. Providing healthy meals to students through the School Nutrition Programs can significantly increase food-security for students. In fact, a [recent study](#) found that U.S. children are getting their healthiest meals at school, demonstrating that school meals are one of the federal government's most powerful tools for delivering good nutrition to children.

The School Nutrition Programs support academic achievement. School meals serve as both a nutritional support and an educational support because hungry children do not have the focus and energy to learn or get the most out of their school day. There is a strong body of research that links participation in school meals to positive educational and health outcomes for our nation's children. Studies have shown participation in school meals improves students' attendance, behavior, and academic achievement, and reduces tardiness. Students who eat breakfast at school [perform better on standardized tests](#) than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home, and have improved scores in spelling, reading, and math. Additionally, school breakfast

reduces the number of visits to the school nurse in the morning, [improves students' mental health](#), and reduces behavioral problems, anxiety, and depression. The positive impacts of participating in school meals are long lasting, supporting long-term overall educational attainment among students participating in school meals. Our research brief, [School Meals are Essential for Student Health and Learning](#) outlines the additional benefits of school meals.

All students should receive free school meals. Building back from the pandemic gives us an opportunity to reimagine the way school meal programs operate. Serving school meals to all students at no cost would be a gamechanger for students, families and schools, supporting students' education and health and improving school nutrition finances and operations.

Serving all students eliminates the stigma associated with school meals and will put an end to unpaid school meal debt. Offering free and reduced-price meals only to students from low-income households can create a stigma and reduce participation. By providing every student the opportunity to participate in school meals, the stigma some children, particularly older students, fear of being labeled low-income by their classmates is eliminated. Free meals for all students eliminate school meal debt, which has been a problem for many families and schools under a tiered payment system.

No child should be subjected to lunch shaming practices. When students who are not certified to receive free school meals arrive in the cafeteria without cash in hand or in their school meals account, the district must determine how to handle the situation. How school districts deal with unpaid school meals debt has a big impact on students and the quality of the culture inside and outside of the school cafeteria. It also affects whether or not students have the healthy nutrition they need to focus and concentrate throughout the school day. The provisions in HB 1494 protect students with unpaid school meal debt from being publicly identified; ensure food is not wasted and that children are not sent the message that their school would rather throw food in the trash than let them eat it; prohibits students and their siblings from being punished and prevented from participating in important school activities and events; and prohibits the use of a collection agency to collect unpaid school meal debt.

Providing free school meals to all students is an investment in North Dakota's future. We urge you to support HB 1491 and HB 1494.

Testimony for HB 1491

Good Morning Chairman Heinert and Education Committee members,

My name is Jonathon Moser. My wife Hannah and I run Forager Farm. Forager Farm is a local direct marketed vegetable farm in Mandan, ND. For 8 of the 9 years of our farm's vegetable operation, we have participated in Farm to School programs with both Jamestown and Bismarck Public Schools. We see the need and the value of using state funds to support North Dakota working families with school age children through providing financial support for those children to access school nutrition. We firmly believe that well-nourished children learn to the best of their ability. We are in support of HB 1491 with the added amendment: to utilize 25 percent of the proposed funding to support the state's agricultural economy by requiring schools to purchase locally grown and raised food. This would not only supply the schools with the highest quality food our state has to offer but also create economic growth in local food production as well as value-added ag based businesses in North Dakota. It would be an investment into the future of our state and build resiliency into each individual community within North Dakota.

Thank you for your consideration. I kindly ask you to amend and pass HB 1491.

I would be willing to answer any questions remotely.

Cell: 701-368-1552

I am writing today in support of House Bill NO. 1491. I would like to disclose that I am the Child Nutrition Director for Bismarck Public Schools, however, I am submitting this testimony as the Legislative Chair on behalf of the North Dakota School Nutrition Association (NDSNA). NDSNA supports feeding all students at no charge.

Child Nutrition Professionals across ND experienced firsthand the benefits of providing healthy meals at no charge to families. Many of our families are just over the threshold of receiving free or reduced-price meals and would benefit greatly if our state could assist them, especially during this difficult time of record-high inflation. Studies show that students that are well-fed learn better, have better test scores, and have reduced behavior issues. Allowing all students to eat for free of charge reduces the stigma that is put on these students who are of lower income level.

NDSNA knows that free meals increases our participation, especially at breakfast. Higher meal participation means a greater amount of entitlement dollars from the federal government that can be used to purchase commodities, some of these being ND products.

There are many details to work out with this bill but feeding our students at no charge is the first step in the right direction. NDSNA is a resource that can be used if you should have any questions. We ask that you please consider passing bill 1491 for the future of our students.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wagner, RD, SNS

Legislative Chair, NDSNA

The reasons are many for the House Education Committee to recommend passage today of HB 1491. I will share three.

One, feeding our children is a basic fundamental priority. Last year, more than 47,000 North Dakota children were served through the Great Plains Food Bank and our network of charitable hunger relief programs. **47,000 children!** It is hard to come up with a single reason why a child in North Dakota needs to go hungry. Please support HB 1491 **today**.

Two, hungry children can't learn. Throughout my eight years of service on the Fargo Board of Education, I heard teachers, administrators and staff share data and stories of the challenges students face when they are hungry. They simply are not capable of growing and learning when they are hungry. The Great Plains Food Bank childhood hunger-relief programs – backpack, school pantry and youth summer meals– along with our network of 200 partner food pantries across the state are feeding kids every day **while they are home**. Solving childhood hunger requires partnerships and passage of HB 1491 will tell North Dakota children you know they don't need to go hungry **during the school day either**. Please join with the Great Plains Food Bank in our work to end hunger **together**. North Dakota children need you.

Three, the Great Plains Food Bank serves one in four children. HB 1491 goes beyond filling the tummies of our food-insecure children—it will help provide nourishment so they can grow and thrive and be the workforce, leaders, and community builders we need **tomorrow**. As we look at ways to incentivize employees and businesses to move to the state, and strive to build an even stronger workforce, add free student lunches into the mix of the many great reasons to be in North Dakota. At the Great Plains Food Bank, we believe that when you feed a child, you feed the future, and HB 1491 will feed North Dakota's future tenfold.

Thank you for your consideration and support of HB 1491.

Rebecca Knutson
Great Plains Food Bank, Corporate Engagement Manager
Former member and president, Fargo Board of Education

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1491
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

January 30, 2023

**By: Linda Schloer, Director of child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs
701-328-4565
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee:

My name is Linda Schloer, and I am the Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to provide information regarding HB 1491 regarding grants to schools to provide free lunches to students.

First, I need to clarify that the appropriation amount listed in this bill includes that cost of providing both school lunch and breakfast. The calculation was requested from our office last fall and I probably failed to clarify that fact.

Today I would like to explain how the funding amount in HB 1491 was calculated. The calculation is based on current daily student participation in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast program and student eligibility for free, reduced price or paid meals. The cost per meal is calculated by subtracting the federal reimbursement received for each meal from the free reimbursement rate. For example, a district receives 85 cents in federal reimbursement for each lunch claimed under the paid category. The free reimbursement rate is \$4.41. Subtracting .85 from \$4.41 equals \$3.56, which would be the state cost for the meal. The estimated total

number of meals by type (breakfast or lunch) and by eligibility category (free, reduced price and paid) claimed each year was then multiplied times the State rate.

Student access to meals at no charge in North Dakota has shown to have an impact on student participation in the school breakfast program, but not lunch. Daily breakfast participation in SY 21-22 averaged around 38,000 meals/day. The daily average this year is about 32,000. Lunch participation, which averages around 88,000 meals per day is about the same as SY 21-22 participation.

Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee that concludes my prepared testimony and I will stand for any questions that you may have.

Written testimony in support of HB1491 to provide grants for schools for lunch for students.

As a member of the West Fargo, North Dakota, community I am in favor of a bill that would allow students to eat lunch without charge. I am a board member of a non-profit that assists schools to feed children that are hungry and cannot afford school lunch and/or food for their families at home. The food shortage and hunger issues in our communities is growing. If a school grant for school lunches can provide a meal to a hungry student to contribute to their ability to learn and thrive, I am in favor. I have also been a foster parent and saw first-hand the negative behaviors and struggles children face when they are hungry. Food is a necessity that should be provided at school, not optional.

Thank you

Janelle Albrecht

1303 Diversion Drive

West Fargo, ND 58078



North Dakota Native Vote
919 S. 7th St., Suite 603
Bismarck North Dakota 58504
1-888-425-1483
info@ndnativevote.org

Statement of Sharnell Seaboy regarding HB 1491
Field Organizer at North Dakota Native Vote
January 30, 2023
House Education Committee

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Sharnell Seaboy. I am an enrolled citizen of the Mni Wakan Oyate (Spirit Lake Nation) and I am a Field Organizer at North Dakota Native Vote. We are here to testify in support of HB 1491.

North Dakota Native Vote is a non-partisan grassroots organization. Our mission is to create and affect policy to promote equitable representation for the Native people of North Dakota.

We have three key points that we would like to address with the committee today:

- First, we are all experiencing the impacts of today's inflation rate and the rising cost of living. In some of our communities in North Dakota, the wages are not keeping up and are contributing to more families struggling to make ends meet. Many of these families are those who do not currently qualify for free and reduced meals. Eliminating that barrier is a good thing for all families.
- Second, the schools have our children for up to 7 hours per day. During a school day there are two meal times. We feel that having a nutritious meal that students can depend on promotes learning. Many students come from working families and sometimes their best meal of the day is at school.
- Finally, providing free meals to all public school students could be a win for school retention and a win for parents trusting the school lunch system. By passing this bill, there can be opportunities for farm to school food cooperation to provide locally grown food to students.

Regardless of income, North Dakota Native Vote believes that making sure every student has a nutritious meal at school is the right thing to do. Therefore, North Dakota Native Vote recommends a DO PASS on HB 1491.

Pidamiya-ye (Thank you).

Testimony Prepared for the
House Education Committee

January 30, 2023

By: Julie St Germaine, Director of Central Prairie Human Service Zone
serving the counties of Eddy, Foster, and Wells.

**RE: HB 1491: A bill for an Act to provide appropriation to the
superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to schools for
lunch for students**

Chairman Heinert, and Members of the Committee. My name is Julie St Germaine, I am providing testimony in favor of HB 1491, in its current form. I am a member of the Human Service Zone Director's Association of North Dakota. The ND Zone Director Association supports the funding of school lunch for all students, regardless of their ability to pay. Hunger is a real issue, plaguing our school children. Without healthy meals, children tend to show diminished capabilities in the classroom. Human Service Zones support healthy meals for healthy families and children.

I am strongly urging a due pass on this HB 1491.

Please note the following definition of "Identified Relative" in North Dakota's child welfare policy:

*"Identified Relative" means the child's grandparent, great-grandparent, sibling, half-sibling, aunt, great-aunt, uncle, great-uncle, nephew, niece or first cousin. An individual with a relationship to the children, derived through a current or former spouse of the child's parent, similar to a relationship described in the first sentence. **An individual recognized in the child's community as having a relationship with the child similar to a relationship described in the first sentence;** A child's stepparent. (NDCC 50-11).*

Because foster families have already been in a caregiving role for a child, they already have some elevated standing when considering adoptive options. However, this caregiving role, should not blindly supersede biological familial connections to the child.

*The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 requires that states "consider giving **preference to adult relative caregivers over non-relative caregivers when considering placement of a child.** This is consistent with the philosophy of placing a child in the "least restrictive environment."*

The language in this proposed bill does allow exception for cases in which the Indian Child Welfare Act applies. This federal law seeks to keep Indian children with their Indian families after evidence indicated a large number of Indian children were being removed from their families and placed with non-Indian families. We want to have similar protections of family, culture and community for all children.

Thank you for considering of my testimony relating to this bill. I stand for any questions the committee may have.

House Education Committee
HB 1491
January 30, 2023

Chairman Heinert, Vice Chair Schreiber-Beck, and Committee Members, the Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas (CHAD) is pleased to present written testimony for HB 1491. CHAD is a non-profit membership organization serving as the primary care association for North Dakota and South Dakota.

First, I would like to share a little background on the health care organizations CHAD represents. Community health centers are non-profit, community-driven primary care clinics. Each clinic provides high-quality primary and preventive care to all individuals, with or without insurance and regardless of their ability to pay. Health centers are essential medical homes where patients find services that promote health, diagnose and treat disease, manage chronic conditions and disabilities, and overcome barriers that prevent them from getting healthy and staying healthy. Health centers in North Dakota serve approximately 26,000 primary and behavioral health care patients and nearly 13,000 dental patients.

Health centers understand that many factors contribute to a person's health status. Access to health care is certainly important, but socioeconomic factors such as access to nutritious food play a significant role. Food insecurity places individuals at increased risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and kidney disease. This can lead to more significant health complications, emergency room usage, hospital stays, and readmissions.¹

Community health centers see firsthand the food and nutrition security needs across our state. In fact, preliminary screening data from North Dakota health centers show that food insecurity is the 2nd highest need across the fourteen social determinants of health. Through a partnership with the food bank, community health centers in North Dakota have distributed more than 6,700 pounds of food to patients in need over the past year. Still, the need for greater food security in communities remains.

We support efforts to create more sustainable access to healthy food and remove cost barriers for families and individuals. We know there are many policy levers to address food insecurity, and we support this critical discussion.

¹ <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/explore-our-work/community-health-care-partnerships/>

Chairperson Heinert and members of House Education Committee:

My name is Grant Syverson, I am a pediatric rheumatologist in Fargo and the legislative advocacy liaison for the North Dakota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I am writing today on behalf of the pediatricians of North Dakota in support of HB 1491. As pediatricians we know the impact of good nutrition on the health and well-being of children. Hungry children have difficulty learning. In North Dakota and around the country many families experience food insecurity and school breakfast and lunch help to bridge this gap.

Providing school meals is one of the best investments for our children and is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time,

Dr. Grant Syverson

HB 1491

My name is Deven Mantz. I live in district 5 in Minot. I am also the North Dakota State Legislative Director for the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way – International Brotherhood of Teamsters (BMWED-IBT). We represent track maintenance workers on the railroads. I come here as also a parent. A parent with 4 kids, 3 of them are in public school right now. That's why I'm proud that we have officially endorsed HB 1491.

This bill isn't only about feeding the next generation, it's also about welcoming the next generation. It's no secret that North Dakotans my age, and younger, have been leaving this state at an alarming rate. We don't have waterfalls, we don't have mountains, and we don't have forests. What we do have is integrity. We work hard. We have community and we take care of our own. This is an important step to show working people from around the country, that if they make the trek to North Dakota, we will welcome them; and they will be apart of this great community.

We, as a state, need to stand up for the most vulnerable, our children. We have the opportunity to do something great here. To make a lasting effect that will impact and add one more reason, for workers to stay in North Dakota. We have the means – we must invest in our future.

The BMWED-IBT supports this bill, because this bill isn't just to protect our children, but will also help working families throughout North Dakota, for generations to come.

Deven Mantz

ND Legislative Director

BMWED-IBT

701-833-0182

23.0847.01001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for
Representative Hager
January 30, 2023

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1491

Page 1, line 1, after the first "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to a school lunch grant program; and to"

Page 1, line 1, remove "to the superintendent of public instruction to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "provide grants to schools for lunch for students"

Page 1, after line 3, insert:

"SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 15.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Student lunch - Grant program.

The superintendent of public instruction shall create a program to provide grants to public schools to defray the expenses of providing lunch, free of charge, to all students enrolled in public schools on each day students attend school. The superintendent of public instruction shall develop guidelines and reporting requirements for the grant program."

Page 1, line 8, after "districts" insert "under section 1 of this Act"

Page 1, line 10, remove "The superintendent of public instruction shall develop guidelines and reporting"

Page 1, remove line 11

Renumber accordingly

Senate Education Committee
HB 1491
March 15, 2023

Dear Chairman Elkin and Committee Members,

The Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas (CHAD) is pleased to provide written testimony for HB 1491. CHAD is a non-profit membership organization serving as the primary care association for North Dakota and South Dakota.

First, I would like to share a little background on the health care organizations CHAD represents. Community health centers are non-profit, community-driven primary care clinics. Each clinic provides high-quality primary and preventive care to all individuals, with or without insurance and regardless of their ability to pay. Health centers are essential medical homes where patients find services that promote health, diagnose and treat disease, manage chronic conditions and disabilities, and overcome barriers that prevent them from getting healthy and staying healthy. Health centers in North Dakota serve approximately 26,000 primary and behavioral health care patients and nearly 13,000 dental patients.

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¹ <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/explore-our-work/community-health-care-partnerships/>

Testimony In Support of HB 1491

Karen K. Ehrens, RD, LRD
Bismarck
March 12, 2023

Chair Elkin and Members of the Education Committee:

Please allow yourselves the chance to see a new and better way of supporting children and education in North Dakota. You have the power to change the school day for more students in our schools. With a “Do pass” recommendation, you can make happen this vision:

Each of the young people who enters a school gets what they need to support learning: desks, books, computers, a bus ride, and breakfast & lunch.

Experience and research have shown that nourishing food is essential to learning and as an integral part of the school day for all children. Children who do not have food security are at least twice as likely to report being in fair or poor health. Food insecurity in children is associated with poor educational performance and academic outcomes and with challenges in mental health and behavioral health.¹ Food at school served at lunch, breakfast, and/or healthful snacks is a vital source of healthful food for North Dakota’s children.

While increasing the percentage of federal poverty level for qualifying for free meals from 185% of federal poverty level to 200% of the FPL will reach more families, increasing the percentage to 400% of FPL would reach even more. The last analysis of levels of food insecurity by FPL in North Dakota was completed in 2019². In 2015-17, 28% of families experiencing food insecurity had incomes of 200-400% of the FPL (see slide 8 at

https://www.ndlegis.gov/files/committees/66-2019/21_5053_03000appendixe.pdf)

By limiting the rate increase to 200% FPL, families will be missed, and children may go without breakfast or lunch.

Creative solutions are welcomed and needed to ensure that the most vulnerable among us, our children, have enough to eat now and into the future. Ensuring that all the children in our care in the state of North Dakota have enough to eat is a basic minimum that should and can be provided. Schools can continue to be trusted and available partners to get food to children when they have adequate support for the people and resources needed to provide vital school meals: food service personnel with adequate equipment and wages; food to serve, equipment to store, prepare and serve food during school the school day; and the ability to cover the expenses for doing so.

Healthy School Meals for All, or meals as an integrated part of the school day not singled out with a separate fee for families, can bring many benefits to students, schools, and our society. Food for school children is an worthy investment with dividends of healthier children with improved learning. Please give this bill a “Do pass” recommendation and vote for it on the floor of the House. **North Dakota families now and in the future will thank you for it.**

References:

1. *The Impact of Poverty, Food Insecurity, and Poor Nutrition on Health and Well-Being*, Food Research & Action Center, 2017. Accessed at

<https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/hunger-health-impact-poverty-food-insecurity-health-well-being.pdf>

2. *Food Insecurity in North Dakota*, North Dakota Kids Count, 2019, accessed at

https://www.ndlegis.gov/files/committees/66-2019/21_5053_03000appendixe.pdf



NORTH DAKOTA STATE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

2901 Twin City Dr. Suite 201
Mandan, North Dakota 58554
(701) 663-8821

© SCRU 260-C

March 15, 2023

To the Honorable Jay Elkin and Senators of the Senate Education Committee:

Representing workers in the commercial, industrial, and residential construction industries, foundation to finish, we are committed to promoting, recruiting, developing, and advocating for careers in the skilled trades. We support House Bill 1491 to provide grants to school districts to provide lunch to students with limited fiscal means in North Dakota.

We are invested in educating young people that choose the building trades through our apprenticeship education programs. Having proper nutrition is essential to being a dedicated, motivated learner in an apprentice's education.

Conversely, students in our public schools need to have proper nutrition in order to perform at their best to reach their full potential. One of the best ways to invest in our future apprentices is to ensure their nutrition while in school.

Therefore, the North Dakota State Building and Construction Trades Council urges a Do Pass on House Bill 1491 from the Senate Education Committee.

Sincerely, I am

Jason Ehlert
President

Testimony of Landis Larson, ND AFL-CIO President
In Support of HB 1491
March 15, 2023

Chairperson Elkin and members of Senate Education:

My name is Landis Larson, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO. The North Dakota AFL-CIO is the federation of labor unions in North Dakota, representing the interests of all working people in our state.

I am testifying on behalf of the North Dakota AFL-CIO in support of House Bill 1491.

We strongly believe that it is our moral obligation as society to provide students all the tools they need to learn and grow while they are in our care at school, and that includes adequate nutrition. Not only is it the right thing to do, but funding for school meals is one of the best investments we could make in our students, our families and our future. We all know that hunger and anxiety about meals impacts students ability to concentrate, and well fed students are better learners and have fewer behavioral issues.

North Dakota's working families are facing steep increases in basic cost of living, specifically food and housing costs. Providing school meals would help our families and our school districts better balance their budgets in these difficult economic times. For those families that qualify for this bill as it stands, at 200% of poverty, this legislation would be a major relief.

North Dakota has an incredible opportunity to be a leader on school meals policy. Not only do we support House Bill 1491, but we prefer that it be changed back to the pre-amendment funding level of \$89.5 Million to provide school meals for ALL students at no cost, regardless of income. Even funding free school meals to the level of 400% of poverty would ensure that most families in North Dakota would qualify while those most able to pay continue to do so.

Making sure our kids have access to all the tools they need to be successful while they are at school, including proper nutrition, just makes sense.

The North Dakota AFL-CIO fully supports House Bill 1491.



1 Testimony in support

2 HB 1491 – School Lunch Grant

3 Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education committee. We come to you with
4 support of this bill.

5 Unpaid lunch debt is a very real issue in schools – this is a hard reality as we come out of
6 COVID with families who have become accustomed to or who have never had to before
7 pay for school lunch. HB 1491 provides a grant to schools to pay for school meals to
8 students that meet the criteria outlined in this bill.

9 HB 1491 would appropriate \$6 million to the state superintendent for the purpose of
10 providing grants to school districts to defray the expenses of providing free meals for
11 students whose families are at or below a 200% federal poverty level. Twenty-eight
12 percent of North Dakota students fall at or below the 200% federal poverty level.

13 We know how incredibly important it is for kids to have a nutritious meal to learn well.
14 We want them to have food to do so. We must be able to be fiscally responsible about how
15 we approach this issue. Thank you for the time to testify on this bill.

Chairman Elkin and Members of the Committee,

My name is Heather Gades, and I am a titleholder at the local level within the Miss America Organization and a candidate for Miss North Dakota this coming June – however, my testimony does not necessarily reflect the views of either the Miss America Organization or the Miss North Dakota Organization. My current title is Miss Bonanzaville, and as a titleholder, we each select a service initiative that we want to support and work on during our year of service. Mine is Combatting Food Insecurity – One Box at a Time, a project that is the culmination of my six years of working on this issue. I have met with food pantries in the Fargo-Moorhead area, volunteered at a few, helped create the first food pantry at North Dakota State University (NDSU) called Goods for the Herd and currently am on the advisory board in a volunteer capacity, attended meetings, and read books to school children that talk about food insecurity, how it can happen to anyone, and who we can go to for help.

I am here today to give testimony in favor of HB 1491, to provide free school lunch for students in grades K-12. In 2017 the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that 6% of children in North Dakota were living in “high poverty areas”. In 2022, the Great Plains Food Bank reported that their most recent estimates of food insecurity in the state were 1 in 6 people. To be food insecure is to have an inconsistent or no lack of access to foods, particularly foods that are high in nutrients and minerals. According to Feeding America, a child who is food insecure is at an increased risk of delayed development, chronic illnesses such as asthma and anemia, and behavioral troubles like anxiety, aggression, and hyperactivity. A 2019 study published in the American Academy of Pediatrics reported that asthma diagnosis rates and depressive symptoms were 19.1% and 27.9% higher respectively

than children who were not in food insecure households. That same study also noted that foregone medical care rates were 179.8% higher for those same households.

I understand that for many conservatives, the cost of this is prohibitive. I know it's not in the nature of many people to mark off a large chunk of money for something that won't benefit themselves at all. But I ask you to look past the price tag and see the change this funding could make in the lives of so many children in North Dakota. Children who are food insecure are fighting an uphill battle for the rest of their lives. One way this can be helped is to ensure that all school children in our state have access to consistent meals in school. Making sure that all kids, regardless of family income, can have at least five warm and nutritious meals a week is something we should not shy away from. While many kids from impoverished families may already be receiving free lunches, this bill would help the kids whose families currently make just a little too much money to qualify for free meals, but do not make enough money to properly make ends meet. This was my family in 2016 when my mom did what most people would commend her for doing, and got a promotion at work. But with her new job, we didn't qualify for reduced price lunch anymore, and now had to pay full price for three kids eating lunch five days a week. This bill will protect more families from having to worry about that, and keep children fed so they can focus in class, play with their friends or in sports after school, and their brain and body can develop fully.

Thank you for your time Chairman Elkin and Members of the Committee.

Heather Gades, Miss Bonanzaville 2023



North Dakota Native Vote
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Bismarck North Dakota 58504
1-888-425-1483
info@ndnativevote.org

Statement of Sharnell Seaboy regarding HB 1491
Field Organizer at North Dakota Native Vote
March 15, 2023
House Education Committee

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Sharnell Seaboy. I am an enrolled citizen of the Mni Wakan Oyate (Spirit Lake Nation) and I am a Field Organizer at North Dakota Native Vote. We are here to testify in support of HB 1491.

North Dakota Native Vote is a non-partisan grassroots organization. Our mission is to create and affect policy to promote equitable representation for the Native people of North Dakota.

We have a few key points that we would like to present to the committee today:

- First, the impacts of today's inflation rate and the continued rising cost of living is contributing to more families struggling to make ends meet. In some of our communities in North Dakota, low income households are feeling the burden of housing and food costs. Many of these families are those who do not currently qualify for free and reduced meals. Eliminating that barrier for families would help with food insecurity many students experience.
- Second, it is mandatory for children to be in school for up to 7 hours per day. During a school day there are two meal times. Providing nutritious meals for all students will enhance learning and academic achievement. Why are we not investing in our future law makers, doctors, and educators of North Dakota?
- Finally, The passage of this bill will help create opportunities for farm to school food cooperation to provide locally grown food to students in North Dakota.

Regardless of income, North Dakota Native Vote believes that providing every student with a nutritious free meal at school is the right thing to do. Therefore, North Dakota Native Vote recommends a DO PASS on HB 1491.

Pidamiya-ye (Thank you).

House Bill 1491

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee. For the record, I am Representative LaurieBeth Hager from District 21 in the central part of Fargo and now including a small a portion of West Fargo. Within my district are 4 elementary schools, Madison, Jefferson, Hawthorne and LE Berger Elementary in West Fargo. There are middle students attending either Carl Ben Eielson or Ben Franklin Middle School or Cheney Middle School in WF. High school students attending either Fargo North or Fargo South High School or West Fargo HS. I am here today to present HB 1491 a bill to provide no cost school nutritional resources to students attending Public Schools in our state of North Dakota and to use moneys from the state general funds. HB 1491 has been amended by the House Education committee. This version of the bill will provide free school lunches to a greater number of ND students --those students whose family is earning lower than 200% of the poverty indicator. The estimated cost of this program is \$6 million dollars.

I think each of us knows that if we are hungry or tired it is difficult to concentrate and therefore it is difficult to learn or even participate in classroom activities. Furthermore, my counseling background and experience as a mother, lead me to conclude that many classroom incidents or behavioral issues can be attributed to hunger/food insecurity.

According to the USDA, in 2020, 14.8 percent of children reported being food insecure in the past 30 days. 12 Million children live in food insecure households. What if a simple solution to enhance learning and prevent behavioral issues during the school day is simply to alleviate hunger and food insecurity? In ND, the rate of poverty is 11.4 %.

The National School Lunch Program was initiated in 1946 after it was realized during WWII that many men were unable to enlist in the military because of long term effects of childhood malnutrition. By 1975 breakfast was offered because many school children had 2 working parents. During the 2020, COVID Crisis, CARES ACT funds were utilized to provide free school lunches to ALL public school students. Sadly the federal free lunch for all programs were not renewed by the Biden Administration and families are again paying for their children's school lunches. As originally introduced HB 1491 would have reinstated Free Lunch for All.

In our state, public Awareness of student lunch debt increased after Fargo Public School had initiated a student debt policy that sent delinquent accounts to collection agencies. This stunning policy brought attention to the issue that families were unable to afford school lunches for their children.

Several advocacy groups across the state including the in Fargo the Lunch Aid group of musician and others, and Feed FM Kids,. In Grand Forks, there is a non profit group headed by 2 Female Hockey Gold Medal Olympians, in Minot a motorcycle group and in Bismarck a group of artists raised funds to pay off student lunch debt. Many other non profit organizations are engaged in

the mission of assuring students can eat lunch. But Student Lunch debt is not merely an issue in the larger cities of the state, I often hear the stories of how in our rural schools, teachers or others have kicked in to assist students/ families struggling with lunch debt.

Yesterday, the Senate Ed committee heard testimony on another bill, HB 1494 that specifically addresses “lunch debt shaming” when a child’s lunch money account is depleted --a child would get a hand stamp or be offered a different lunch perhaps merely a sandwich or fruit rather than a hot lunch. The original intent of HB 1491 was to completely eliminate lunch debt shaming because ALL students would be provided with a no cost meal.

The Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program is available to lower the costs of school lunch or school breakfast for economically disadvantaged families. The 2022 income guidelines for free and reduced lunch are calculated at 130% and 185% of the poverty level. Households with an income of \$36,075 for a family of 4 currently receive a free meal and households income of \$51,388 would receive a meal at a reduced fee. For perspective, a person earning the state and federal minimum wage of \$7.25 has a yearly income of \$15,080. A person earning \$10.00 an hour has an annual income of \$20,800. And \$31,000 would be the annual income for a person earning \$15 per hour. These families would therefore qualify for free and reduced lunches if they had 2 school children. However the problem exists where families do not qualify according to the federal income guidelines -- 73% of ND families do not qualify and must pay for their children’s school lunches. House Bill 1491 will provide for ND families earning less than 200% of the poverty level to be provided with a free school lunch. If the amended HB 1491 passes, a family of four earning \$60,000 will qualify for free school meals. I have handed out a chart with the 200% income guidelines

The Fiscal note for HB 1491 requests a \$6 Million appropriation for the biennium to provide school meals to approximately 13,000 students attending North Dakota public schools. House Bill 1491 would not duplicate the FFRLP, the funding from FFRLP but would be included in the formulation of the appropriation. When I first introduced this legislation two years ago, it was developed to utilize funding from the state Legacy Fund. But because of the new guidelines for Legacy Fund usage we are not requesting moneys from that fund this year. Instead this legislation requests general fund money to be allocated.

In the past 2 months, 5 or 6 states have already enacted legislation to provide free school meals to their students. Yesterday, March 14th, the Minnesota Senate joined the MN House in passing legislation to provide free school lunches with a \$200 million dollar price tag. Also this week the New Mexico legislature unanimously passed a bill to provide free school meals to all at a cost of \$22.5 million. Each of these bills will be on the governors’ desk for his or her signature. California, Colorado and Maine are additional states that currently provide free school meals.

I believe North Dakota’s most essential legacy is our children and their education is our future. Therefore, let us invest in the children who are in our care while they are in our classrooms.

I have several people here today or who have submitted written testimony regarding the origins of this proposal, the need for this program, statistics on hunger and food insecurity of our school children, and economic issues facing families.

When I was younger, ND proudly called itself the bread basket of the world, now in 2023 let's be a state known for providing our school children FREE Lunches rather than just a sandwich if their family falls behind on their lunch money account.

LET' S DO LUNCH

I thank the committee for your consideration of House Bill 1491 and I stand for questions.

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee, I am Bob Marthaller, representing North Dakota United, and I am happy to appear before you to urge a do pass recommendation for HB 1491.

Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief in my testimony. I just want to point out that HB 1491 is one of those rare pieces of proposed legislation that makes so much sense, it is hard to believe that it is not already law.

I will boil it down to this: we do not charge families for their children to use district owned Chromebooks, iPads, textbooks, computer labs, or to participate in field experiences. Why? Because we realize that these tools are important educational components which are vital to ensuring meaningful educational experiences for our students. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the same is true of a nutritious and satisfying lunch. Given that we have a compulsory attendance law in North Dakota, isn't it logical that we provide a nutritional lunch while these children are in our charge? At North Dakota United, we believe that the state that mandates attendance should also cover the cost of school lunches for all children.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I conclude my remarks and urge a do pass recommendation for HB 1491.

HB 1491
Honorable Senate Education Committee Members,

I write this letter today in support of HB 1491. This bill comes with great intentions of ensuring our students have the ability to have a guaranteed well balanced meal in their day. As an educator and Principal, I am thankful that more families would have the opportunity to benefit from this.

What I would like this committee to deeply consider is the following: From my understanding there is \$24,000,000 of "unallocated" money in the state that has not yet been appropriated. I would suggest the committee would utilize the \$24 million dollars that is trying to be claimed by private schools and put it towards students in North Dakota and their meals.

The additional allocation would allow the committee to increase the funding school meal programs.

For example, if the committee would utilize the \$24 million + \$6 million = \$30,000,000

\$30,000,000/115,000 (Approximate # of public-school students of North Dakota)

= Approximately \$260/student annually

Each student could be allocated nearly \$260 per school year to be applied to their meal accounts. This would ensure they have access to a healthy, filling food source for their day. Right now, students are dependent on their parents filling out the paperwork. As a school we encourage this and send reminders to do so, however students are still missed. Allocating state public dollars to school meals makes sense for our students and families.

Please consider these thoughts and continue working towards making school meals free for all students,

Cassidy Lyngaas

Mrs. Lyngaas

Elementary Principal



Wing Public School

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School Board

Sheri Fischer, President

Richard Koski, Vice President

Aaron Hertz

Gregory Fischer

Jason Bosch

Administration

Cari Kramer, Superintendent/Secondary Principal

Cassidy Lyngaas, Elementary Principal

Rebecca Bernhardt, Business Manager



Contact:
Matt Perdue, Lobbyist
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**Testimony of
Matt Perdue
North Dakota Farmers Union
Before the
Senate Education Committee
March 15, 2023**

Chairman Elkin and members of the committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill No. 1491. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union’s (NDFU) members.

NDFU supports HB 1491, which would ensure all public school students at or below 200% of the federal poverty line can access free school meals. NDFU’s member-driven Policy & Action states “we support free school breakfasts and lunch for every child.” Our members are proud of their work to provide food, fiber and fuel for our country and world. We feel a strong obligation to connect the food we produce to hungry people, especially those in our own communities. HB 1491 is an important step toward meeting that obligation.

We respectfully request a “Do Pass” recommendation on HB 1491. Thank you.

**Testimony of Lunch Aid, North Dakota
In Support of HB 1491 and HB 1494
January 29, 2023**

Greetings North Dakota Legislators,

We write to you in our capacity as the cofounders of Lunch Aid, North Dakota. We are in very strong support of Universal Hot Lunch for all North Dakota k-12 public school students (HB 1491). We would also like to strongly encourage you to vote in favor of ending all lunch-shaming practices that stigmatize already vulnerable students with cruel practices such as turning them over to collections for unpaid lunch debt (HB 1494).

(1491) There are several reasons to provide a no-cost school lunch to all students.

(1) First and foremost, students learn better when their stomachs are nonempty. There is an abundance of research proving this fact.

(2) We provide critical infrastructure as part of required enrollment in a public school such as desks, books, and sometimes a tablet or laptop. Certainly, we can go the extra distance to provide the most fundamental tool for learning, good nutrition.

(3) Universal hot lunch will attract a desperately needed workforce. We need people to move here instead of MT, SD, or MN. And we need people to stay.

(4) This bill has bipartisan support among the PEOPLE of North Dakota. Let us act on the issues where we are in agreement. We can be a leader and a great example for the rest of the United States

(5) THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA CAN AFFORD IT. A small portion of The Legacy Fund can be used to pay for all of this in perpetuity with a properly managed endowment.

(1494) The reason to pass anti-shaming policies is because it is the right thing to do and it costs the tax payers nothing. Turning people over to collections is ineffective. There is research to show that this punitive measure returns an insignificant portion of lost revenue.

I believe that the state of North Dakota and its legislative representatives have the will, the kindness, and the good sense to pass these two bills. Thank you for your consideration. Please vote in favor of HB 1491 and 1494.

Best Regards,

Jason and Kari Boynton

Lunch Aid, North Dakota

1 HB 1491 - Testimony In Favor

2 North Dakota School Nutrition Association – Michelle Wagner,
3 RD, SNS, NDSNA Legislative Chair

4 Good afternoon, Chairman Elkin and Committee Members,

5 My name is Michelle Wagner, I would like to disclose that I am
6 the Child Nutrition Program Director for Bismarck Public
7 Schools but today I am here representing the North Dakota School
8 Nutrition Association. NDSNA is a non-profit organization with
9 currently 343 members comprised of school cooks, managers, and
10 directors from districts across our state whose job is to feed our
11 students. You could say that our association represents the front-
12 line workers of the school cafeteria.

13 I'd like to share with you today why NDSNA is asking for a "Do
14 Pass" recommendation for HB 1491. This bill helps support the
15 working-class citizens of North Dakota. With the poverty level
16 set at 185% for reduced-price meals, there are many working
17 families that are just over this threshold that do not qualify for
18 meal assistance. It was reported that one family's annual salary
19 was over the Federal Poverty Line by four dollars and therefore

1 reduced meal benefits were denied. Another family was also
2 denied meal benefits because they were twenty dollars a month
3 over the Federal Poverty Line. Many of these parents are working
4 more than one job but because of this they are penalized and will
5 not qualify for a benefit they desperately need. This bill is not a
6 free handout, it's support for those that are contributing to our
7 communities but still struggling to provide for their children.

8 While the proposed House Bill of increasing the poverty line to
9 200% helps bridge the gap between hard-working families and
10 the current inflation many parents are experiencing, amending the
11 proposed bill to 400% would ensure that more families would
12 benefit from this program. For less than the price of a cup of
13 coffee, you are giving these students a chance to succeed. Our
14 cooks that feed students every day know that the meals they are
15 providing make a difference in the student's life. A student
16 cannot learn if their brain is not properly fueled.

17 NDSNA encourages you to give this bill a "Do Pass"
18 recommendation and vote for it on the Senate Floor. Thank you
19 for your time today.

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1491
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

March 15, 2023

**By: Linda Schloer, Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs
701-328-4565
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

Chairman Elkin and Members of the Committee:

My name is Linda Schloer and I am the Director of Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to provide information regarding HB 1491 as amended regarding grants to schools to provide free meals to students.

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are administered nationally by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and through the Department of Public Instruction in North Dakota. In North Dakota, 169 public school districts, with an enrollment of approximately 118,000 students, participate in the National School Lunch Program. The majority of these districts also participate in the School Breakfast Program.

Participating school districts receive cash subsidies and USDA Foods for each reimbursable meal they serve. In exchange, districts must serve meals that meet Federal meal pattern requirements and offer the meals at a free or reduced price to eligible children.

Children may be determined “categorically eligible” for free meals through participation in certain Federal Assistance Programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or based on their status as a homeless, migrant, runaway, or foster child. Children can also qualify for free or reduced-price school meals based on household income and family size. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 and 185 percent of the Federal poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals. Currently, in public districts, approximately 15,000 students qualify for free meals by being categorically eligible, 15,000 students qualify for free meals based on household income and family size, and 7,600 qualify for reduced-price meals based on household income and family size.

In addition, 26 private districts participate in the programs with a total enrollment of 6,695 students, of which 476 are eligible for free meals and 156 reduced-price.

Student access to meals at no charge in North Dakota has been shown to have an impact on student participation in school meal programs. In public districts, daily breakfast participation in SY 21-22, when all students received meals free of charge, averaged around 38,500 meals/day. The daily average this year is about 28,500, a

26% decrease. Lunch participation is down 7% from 86,000 meals in SY 21-22 to 80,000 meals this school year.

HB 1491. As amended, will provide free meal benefits to approximately 10,000 additional students. 7,600 students will go from reduced-price to free, and 2,400 students that live in households with incomes that fall in the 185% to 200% poverty level will go from full-pay status to free. The total biennial cost to provide these additional meals is estimated at \$6 million. For each additional 5% increase in the poverty level for free meal eligibility, approximately 700 additional students will receive free meals at school, and the cost to the state will increase by about \$1.3 million per biennium. It's important to note that these numbers are estimates, as the exact number of public school district students that fall within the particular income levels is not available.

Districts will continue to collect free and reduced-price applications from households and claim meals based on individual student eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. In fact, this process will increase in complexity as districts will need to identify students that qualify based on federal guidelines vs. state guidelines. To claim reimbursement for meals served, districts will be required to identify meal participation for these separate eligibility categories as well.

Chairman Elkin and Members of the Committee that concludes my prepared testimony. I will stand for any questions that you may have.



March 15, 2023

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee,

As the state's largest hunger-relief organization and its only food bank, the Great Plains Food Bank gives its full support and strongly urges the committee to recommend a "do-pass" on HB 1491 to ensure more kids have access to a free school meals. With this bill, we have an opportunity to take impactful steps toward ending childhood hunger across our state.

We believe that when you feed a child, you feed the future. Last year, more than 47,000 North Dakota children (1 in 4 children) were served through the Great Plains Food Bank and our network of charitable hunger relief programs. Our trio of childhood hunger-relief programs – backpack program, school pantry program and youth summer meals program – along with our network of 200 partner food pantries across the state are feeding kids every day while they are home. But this does nothing to feed them while they are in school when they are trying to learn and to grow.

Daily we hear from teachers, administrators, and counselors that hunger among school-aged children continues to be an issue.

Children who are under or malnourished or food insecure face a myriad of issues and challenges. Although the effects of food insecurity can be harmful to anyone, they can be particularly devastating for children. Not having enough healthy food can have serious implications for a child's physical and mental health, academic achievement, and future economic prosperity. Children facing hunger and more likely to have diet related health conditions, experience developmental impairments as they grow, intend to have more social and behavioral problems than they carry to adulthood.

And to think that we have 47,000 ND kids in that camp is heartbreaking.

As you know in 2020, Congress issued a set of waivers to provide free school breakfast and lunches, to all kids regardless of family income. For two years, families didn't have any out of pocket costs to ensure their kids were fed at school. Then in September 2022, that support went away, but the need didn't.

In fact, we saw a 14% in clientele in 2022 compared to 2021. Families are still struggling in a post-COVID world, with inflation and the price of nearly everything rising. Their dollars don't stretch as far as they used to, so they are making sacrifices regularly, choosing between food, and rent, and medication, and heat. They shouldn't have to choose between feeding their kids at home or feeding their kids at school.





We, at the Great Plains Food Bank have a responsibility to keep our children fed, but we can't do it alone. The only way we will eradicate childhood hunger is, together, with public, private, and nonprofit entities working alongside each other.

Thank you for your consideration and support of HB 1491.

Melissa Sobolik
CEO

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www.mprnews.com story 2023/03/14/legislature-primed-to-serve-up-lunch-money-for-minnesota-students

news

Politics and Government

Legislature primed to serve up lunch money for Minnesota students

Brian Bakst St. Paul March 14, 2023 2:10 PM



Free school meals for all Minnesota students are closer to reality following a Minnesota Senate vote Tuesday that would use part of the state's budget surplus to cover a basic breakfast and lunch each day.

Ben Hovland | MPR News

Free school meals for all Minnesota students are closer to reality following a Minnesota Senate vote Tuesday that would use part of the state's budget surplus to cover a basic breakfast and lunch each day.

The Senate's 38-26 vote, which was bipartisan, sends the bill back to the House where a slightly different version passed about a month ago. It would cost the state \$387 million in the first two years and that price tag would grow in the future.

Sen. Heather Gustafson, DFL-Vadnais Heights, said the proposal will save families money and ensure children have nutrition in school settings.

"Look at it like a lunchbox tax cut. It gives money back to families," she said. "But let's put all that aside. Besides the healthy meals and giving money back to families, feeding kids at school is the right thing to do."

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Sen. Michael Kreun, R-Blaine, said families with comfortable incomes will benefit the most because those lower on the economic ladder might already qualify for subsidized meals.

"This is not a tax relief bill," Kreun said. "For every family that receives relief under this bill, some other family is paying for it."

The free meals wouldn't include a la carte purchases offered in many school cafeterias. Second helpings would also remain the duty of families to cover.

Republicans tried unsuccessfully to impose an income cap or redirect the money to other educational purposes.

"We don't have a disagreement when it comes to feeding kids. We have a difference of opinion regarding the priority of funding when it comes to our schools," said Sen. Zach Duckworth, R-Lakeville, who was one of four Republicans to eventually vote for the bill.

Democrats said the bill would lift a paperwork burden on school districts who now have to obtain proof that a child qualifies. They said lunch debt is on the rise, and they argued income is not always a good indicator of students' ability to access nutrition at school.

"We should not make children go hungry because of paperwork," said Sen. Nicole Mitchell, DFL-Woodbury. "We need to set our children up for success and that means them

having full bellies and being in an environment where they can learn.”

The Senate bill contains a clause not in the House version that aims to hold school districts harmless for other aid they get for students in free-and-reduced lunch programs. With a shift away from that measurement, some district leaders worried their connected allowances would fall, too.

Lawmakers would still have to make other changes this year to safeguard district budgets. The DFL-controlled House and Senate are considering a sizable bump to the per-student education formula and potentially linking that to inflation. But the broader education budget is weeks from taking shape.

By isolating the school lunch bill, lawmakers are highlighting efforts to combat food insecurity.

The Hunger-Free Schools Coalition – a group of nonprofits, public health entities and corporations – told lawmakers in a letter that a quarter of students experience some level of food insecurity.

“School breakfast and lunch can account for more than half a child’s daily calories, providing sustenance they may not have reliable access to at home,” the group wrote ahead of the Senate vote. “School meals also help establish lifelong healthy eating habits and can reduce the likelihood of chronic conditions like diabetes and health disease developing later in life.”

The bill replicates a program that was in place during the pandemic that has now lapsed.

Sen. Andrew Mathews, R-Milaca, labeled it “the latest example of socialism.”

“This is another example of government treating all kids the same and it’s not going to accomplish the objective it’s seeking to do,” he said.

In recent years, the Legislature has passed bills outlawing what’s known as lunch shaming, where children are denied a meal or given a substitute that could make their family financial struggles apparent.

“We don’t even know all the students who are hungry. Let’s just get this done and make sure it’s universal and everyone can get the meals they need at school,” said Sen. Clare Oumou Verbeten, DFL-St. Paul, adding, “Today we have an opportunity to step up as a state.”

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[Party-status bill stirs Ventura; backers say it’ll curb ballot ‘mischief’](#)
[President Biden says Jimmy Carter asked him to give his eulogy](#)

https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/legislature/bill-to-provide-free-school-meals-heads-to-governors-desk/article_of8d9e68-c138-11ed-8fe8-27f8e1c97069.html

Bill to provide free school meals heads to governor's desk

By Robert Nott rnott@sfnewmexican.com

Mar 12, 2023

The House of Representatives voted unanimously Sunday night to pass a bill to provide free breakfast and lunch to all New Mexico public school students — regardless of their economic standing.

Senate Bill 4 is now on its way to the desk of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, who is expected to sign it. Lujan Grisham made providing free lunches to all students a priority of hers in this year's 60-day legislative session.

She first brought the idea up during a convention on public health policy in Philadelphia late last year.

"Universal free breakfast and lunch will take the focus off of our children's stomachs and place it on their studies, where they belong," Sen. Michael Padilla, D-Albuquerque, who introduced the bill, said in an interview after the vote.

That's a point educators and child advocates have been making for years — that a hungry child can't learn because of an empty stomach.

SB 4 also encourages districts to prepare healthier meals for children and to work with local farmers and producers to provide food. Schools that choose to offer healthier meals will receive more funding.

The bill comes with a \$22.5 million appropriation that is within House Bill 2, the state budget bill.

Some Republicans who supported the bill questioned whether that was enough money to feed the state's 300,000-plus public school students and help school kitchens adapt to providing healthier meals. During the debate, Rep. Greg Nibert, R-Roswell, called the money "a drop in the bucket."

compared to what I believe our schools and school districts are going to need to accomplish the goals of this legislation.”

Nibert said lawmakers will have to “aggressively” address providing more funding for school meals in the future, adding he doubted the \$22.5 million would be enough to help just Albuquerque Public Schools implement the program.

SB 4 sets up an incentive grant program to schools that meet quality standards to purchase and provide New Mexico-grown, raised or processed food products.

The legislation also encourages doing away with food waste by requiring elementary school students be given enough eating time to finish their meals and by collecting unused food for food pantries, students to take home or charitable entities.

Almost three-quarters of New Mexico students already receive free and reduced-price lunches, according to the Kids Count Data Center — one of the highest rates in the country.

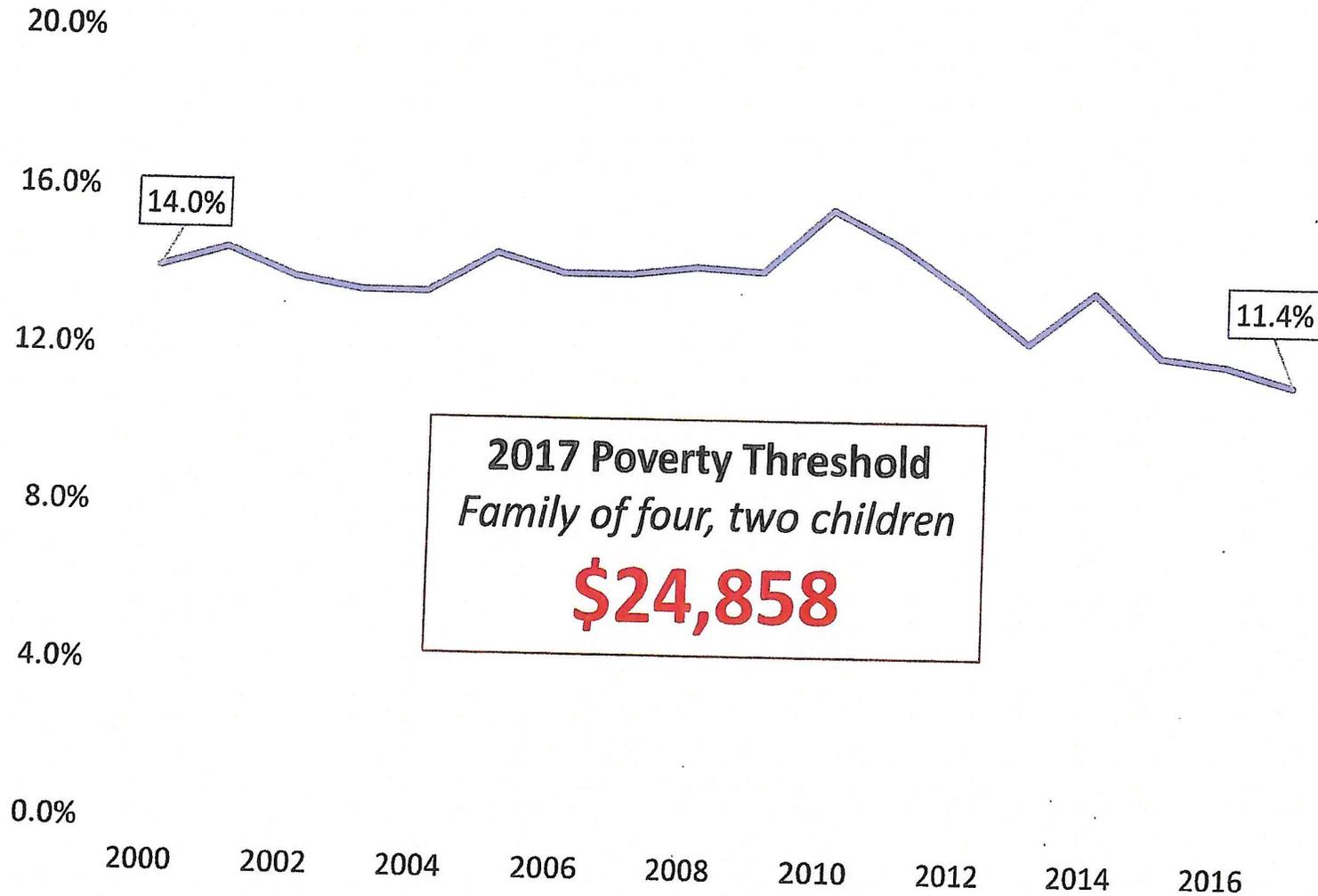
The national nonprofit Feeding America estimates one in five children in New Mexico face hunger problems.

Robert Nott

General Assignment Reporter

Robert Nott has covered education and youth issues for the Santa Fe New Mexican. He is assigned to The New Mexican's city desk where he covers a general assignment beat.

Child Poverty in North Dakota, 2000 to 2017

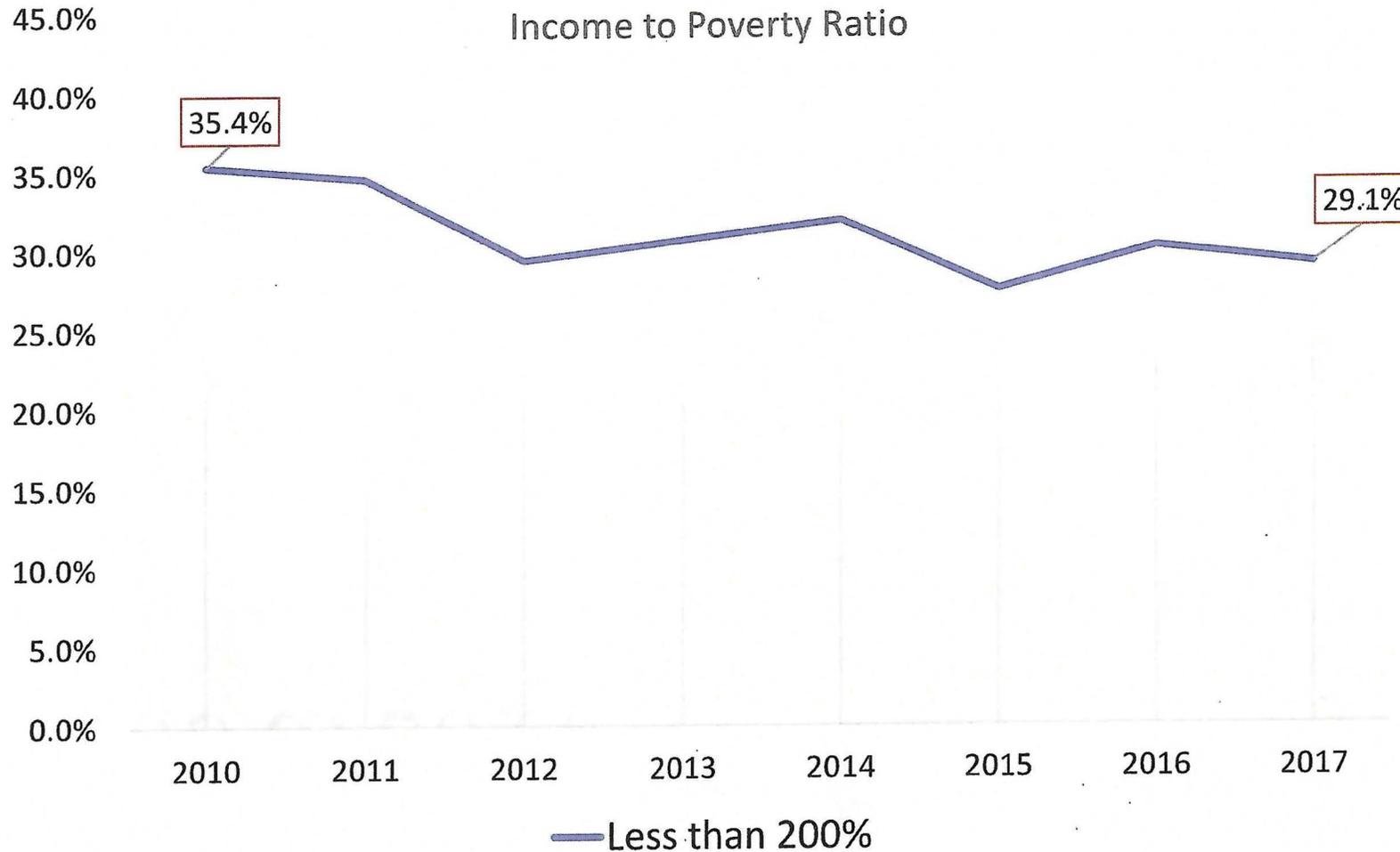


North Dakota KIDS COUNT
www.ndkidscount.org

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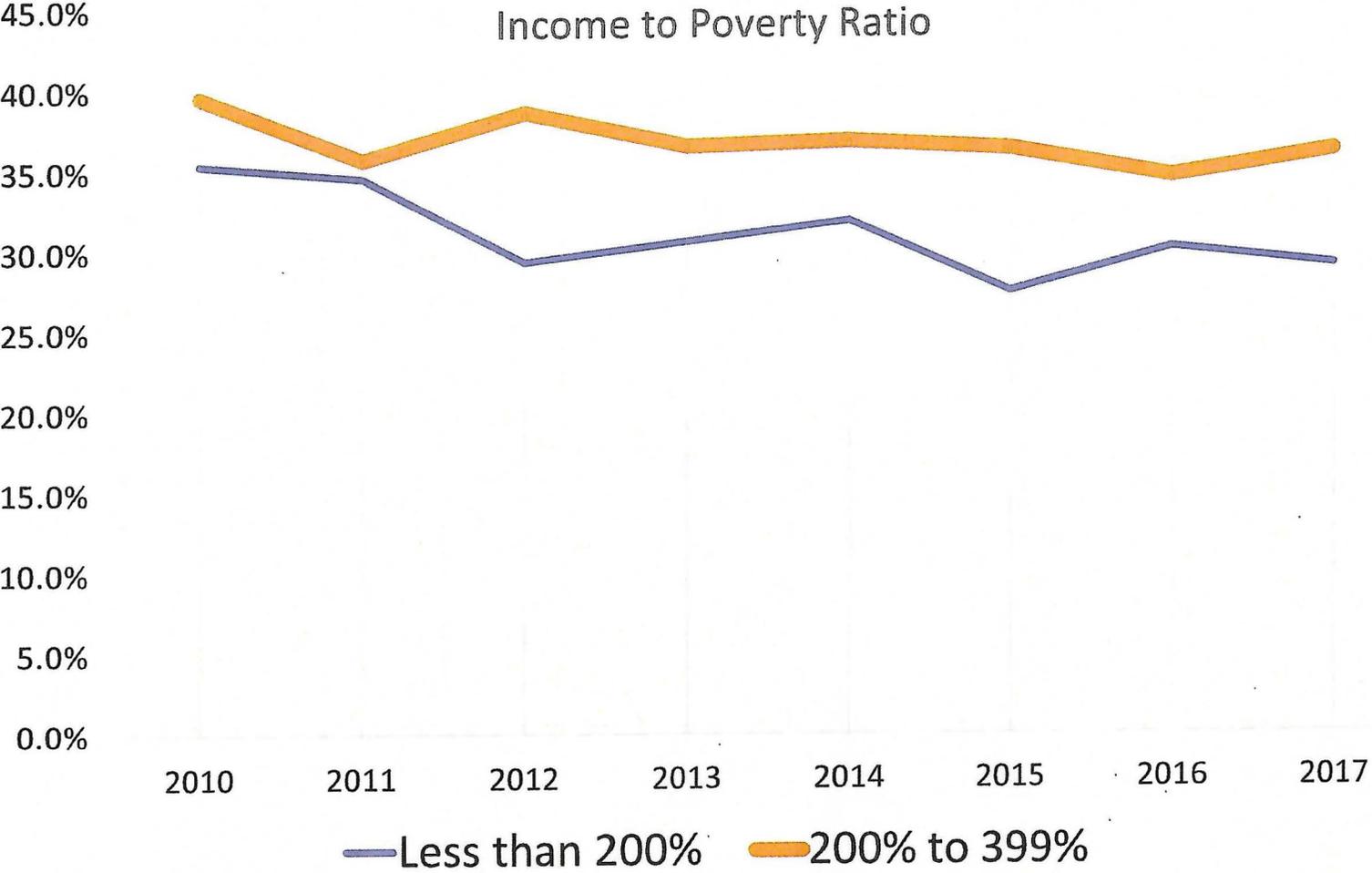
Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

Low Income Children in North Dakota, 2010 to 2017



Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

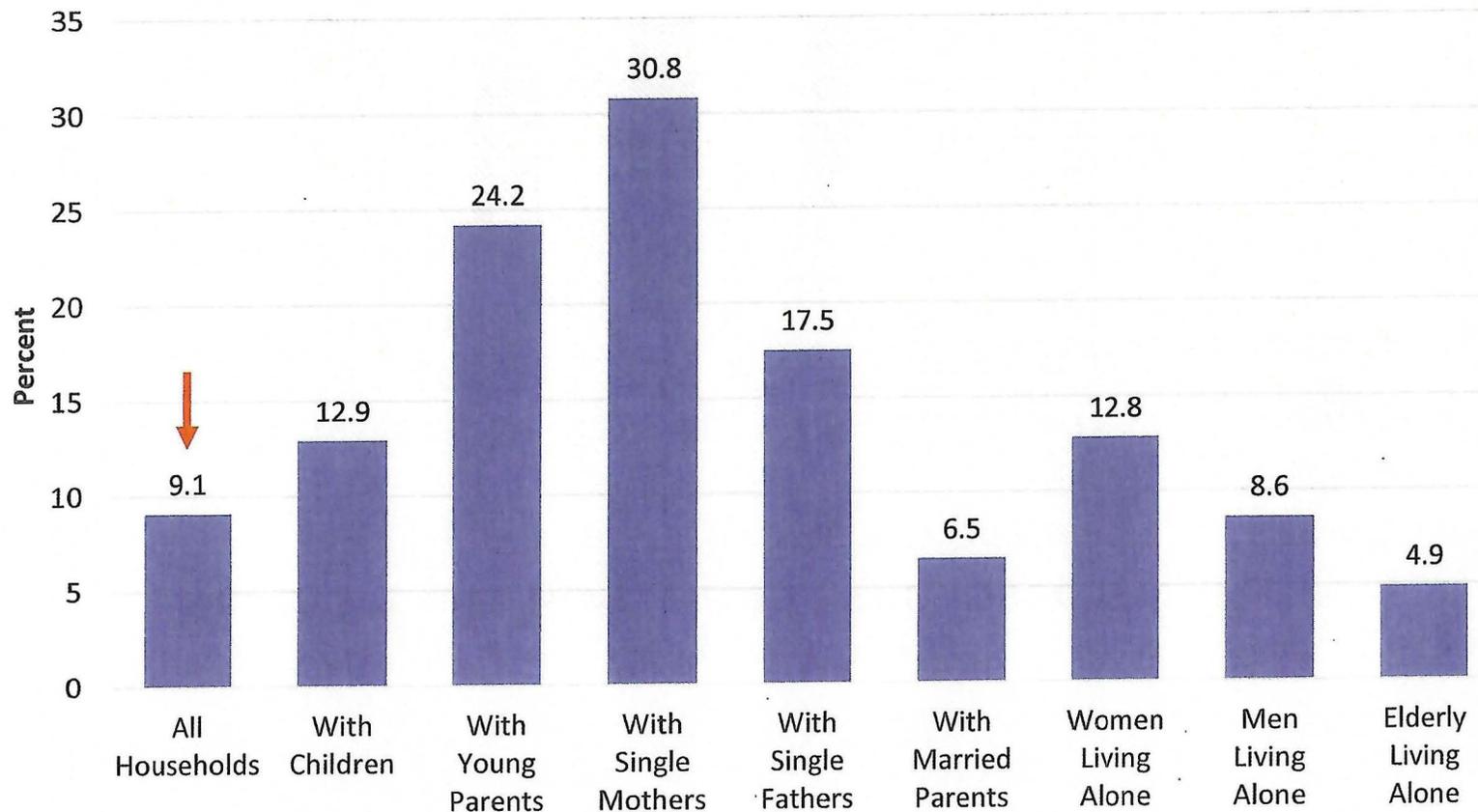
Low and Near Low Income Children in North Dakota, 2010 to 2017



Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Household & Family Type

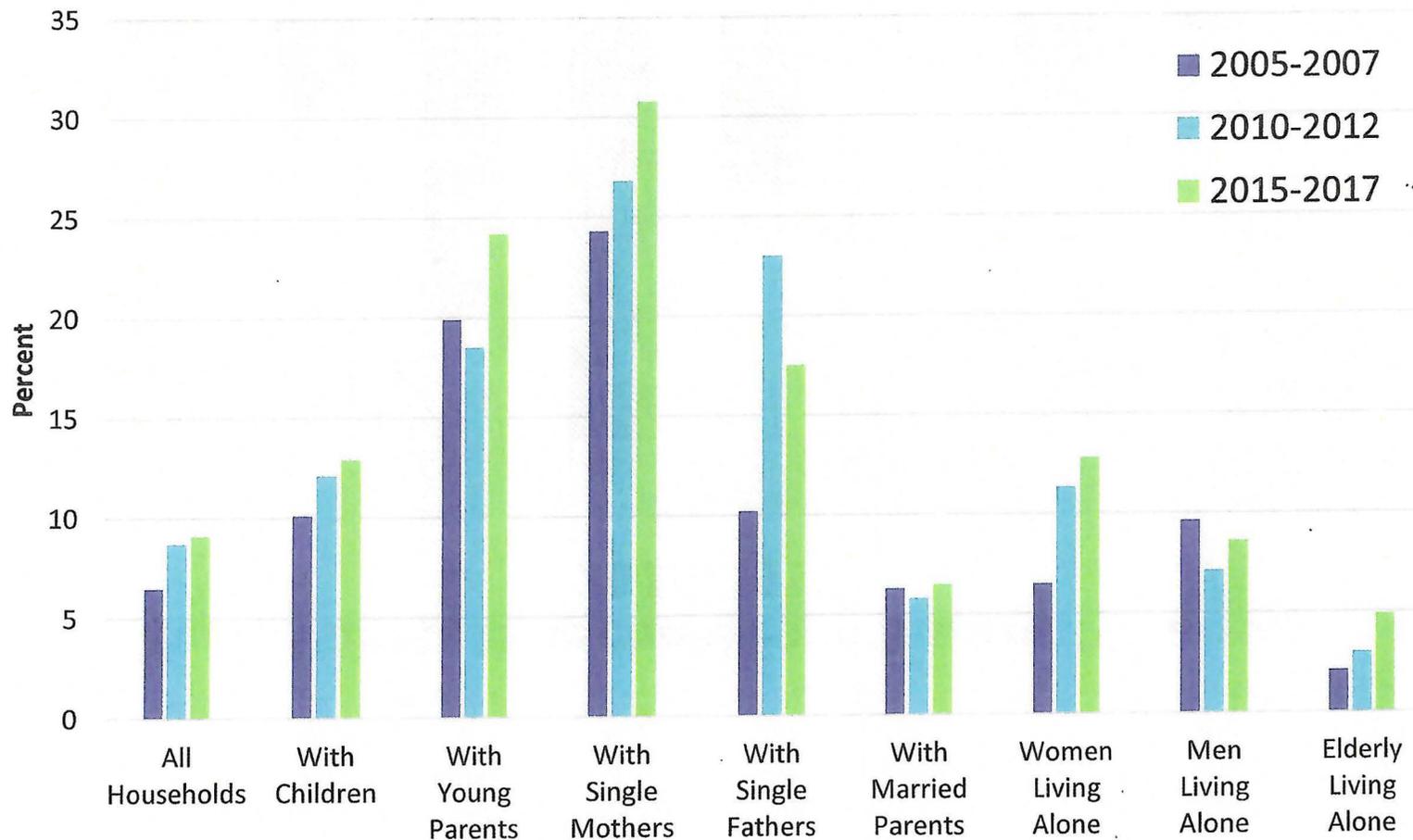
North Dakota Household Food Insecurity Rates, 2015-2017



Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Food Security Supplement

Household & Family Type

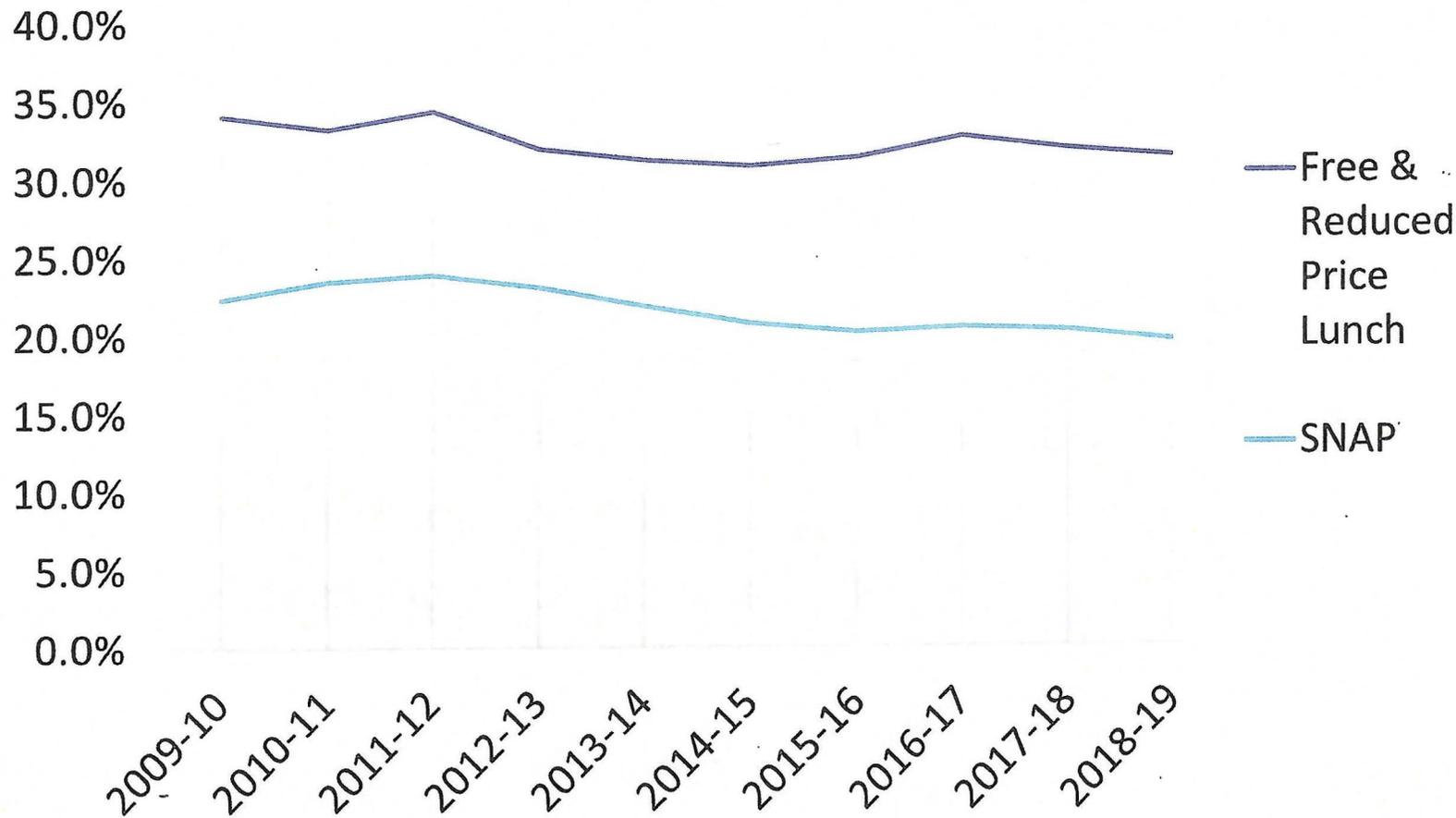
North Dakota Household Food Insecurity Rates



Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Food Security Supplement

SNAP and School Lunch

Percent of North Dakota Children Participating in Free & Reduced Price Lunch and SNAP



SNAP data from the North Dakota Department of Human Services – Lunch data from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Family Size:	Current Free Meal: 130%	Current Reduced Meal: 185%	Updated North Dakota Free Meal: 200%
1	\$18,954.00	\$26,973.00	\$29,160.00
2	\$25,636.00	\$36,482.00	\$39,440.00
3	\$32,318.00	\$45,991.00	\$49,720.00
4	\$39,000.00	\$55,500.00	\$60,000.00
5	\$45,682.00	\$65,009.00	\$70,280.00
6	\$52,364.00	\$74,518.00	\$80,560.00
7	\$59,046.00	\$84,027.00	\$90,840.00
8	\$65,728.00	\$93,536.00	\$101,120.00

Senate Education Committee
Chairman Jay Elkin
March 15, 2023

Testimony
Shane Goettle
Lobbyist for State Association of Nonpublic Schools (SANS)

HB 1491

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Shane Goettle and I am here as the registered lobbyist for the State Association of Nonpublic Schools (SANS).

SANS fully supports the notion that a well-fed mind learns better than one that isn't, and HB 1491 takes a great step in ensuring that our children are prepared for each and every school day. It is true that during the 2020 and 2021 school years, the CARES Act provided free school lunches to all public-school students, but also to all private school students. Private schools in the state also participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, and every one of our schools have families that qualify for the program. Just yesterday you heard Sarah Dudley from St. Michael's school, in Grand Forks, speak on how over the past 10 years, between 17 and 23 percent of her students have been deemed at the poverty level. Additionally, within the private school system, there are mission schools that serve our Native American reservations, which is crucial to keep in mind.

We believe that this is an important policy discussion to have. If the committee decides to move forward with a do pass recommendation, we urge you to include private school students, treating private schools in the same manner that both state and federal policy have through the CARES Act and the Free and Reduced Lunch Program in general. We cannot afford to leave any child behind, and we must work towards ensuring that every student has access to the nutrition they need to succeed.

Thanks for your time today.

23.0847.01001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for
Representative Hager
January 30, 2023

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1491

Page 1, line 1, after the first "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to a school lunch grant program; and to"

Page 1, line 1, remove "to the superintendent of public instruction to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "provide grants to schools for lunch for students"

Page 1, after line 3, insert:

"SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 15.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Student lunch - Grant program.

The superintendent of public instruction shall create a program to provide grants to public schools to defray the expenses of providing lunch, free of charge, to all students enrolled in public schools on each day students attend school. The superintendent of public instruction shall develop guidelines and reporting requirements for the grant program."

Page 1, line 8, after "districts" insert "under section 1 of this Act"

Page 1, line 10, remove "The superintendent of public instruction shall develop guidelines and reporting"

Page 1, remove line 11

Renumber accordingly

Family Size:	Current Free Meal:	Current Reduced Meal:	Updated North Dakota Free Meal:
	130%	185%	200%
1	\$18,954.00	\$26,973.00	\$29,160.00
2	\$25,636.00	\$36,482.00	\$39,440.00
3	\$32,318.00	\$45,991.00	\$49,720.00
4	\$39,000.00	\$55,500.00	\$60,000.00
5	\$45,682.00	\$65,009.00	\$70,280.00
6	\$52,364.00	\$74,518.00	\$80,560.00
7	\$59,046.00	\$84,027.00	\$90,840.00
8	\$65,728.00	\$93,536.00	\$101,120.00