



www.lsc.ohio.gov

OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

S.B. 109
136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Sens. Blessing and Smith

Jessica Sutton, Research Analyst

SUMMARY

- Requires each public and chartered nonpublic school that participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs to provide free school breakfast and lunch to each student.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to reimburse each public and chartered nonpublic school the difference between the federal reimbursement for a paid breakfast and lunch for a student receiving that meal who does not qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast or lunch.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Free school breakfast and lunch

The bill requires each public and chartered nonpublic school participating in the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs to provide each student a free breakfast and lunch. “Public school” includes each school district, community school, STEM school, school building operated by an educational service center (ESC), special education program operated by the county Board of Development Disabilities, and facility offering juvenile day treatment services.

Under current law, public and chartered nonpublic schools are required to provide a free breakfast and lunch to each student who is eligible for a reduced-price breakfast or lunch.¹

State funding

Under the bill, the Department of Education and Workforce is required to reimburse schools for the costs of providing a free breakfast and lunch to each student who does not qualify

¹ R.C. 3313.819.

for a free or reduced-price breakfast or lunch. As a result, the state pays the costs to provide free meals for all students who are at the federal “paid” rate.

Continuing law already requires the Department to reimburse each participating school the difference between the federal “free” reimbursement rate and the federal reimbursement for a reduced-price breakfast and lunch for each student eligible for that reduced-price meal and receiving it – in essence reimbursing schools so that students who qualify for reduced-price meals also may eat for free.²

Background

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets income eligibility guidelines to determine which students are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals, the cost of which are subsidized through federal reimbursements. For the 2024-2025 school year, each student with a family income at or below 185% of the federal poverty level is eligible for reduced-price meals and each student with a family income at or below 130% of the federal poverty level is eligible for free meals.³ The federal government also provides a reimbursement at a “paid” rate for each student not eligible for free or reduced-price meals but who receives a breakfast or lunch. For more information about federal school meal reimbursement rates, see “[School Meal Reimbursement Rates](#),” available on USDA’s website: www.fns.usda.gov/.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-18-25

ANSB0109IN-136/ts

² R.C. 3301.91.

³ 42 United States Code 1758(B)(1)(A). See also the USDA’s [Income Eligibility Guidelines](#) page, available on the USDA’s website: fns.usda.gov/.