

2025 -- H 5983

LC000952

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- FEDERAL AID

Introduced By: Representatives Sanchez, and Cruz

Date Introduced: February 28, 2025

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-8-10 and 16-8-10.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-8 entitled  
2 "Federal Aid [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" are hereby  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 **16-8-10. Mandatory school lunch programs.**

5 All public elementary and secondary schools shall be required to make [breakfast and](#)  
6 federally reimbursable lunches available to students attending those schools through the USDA's  
7 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in accordance with federal regulation as well as rules and  
8 regulations adopted from time to time by the department of elementary and secondary education.

9 ~~To the extent that federal, state, and other funds are available, free and~~ [Free breakfast and](#)  
10 reimbursable lunches shall be provided to all students ~~from families that meet the current specific~~  
11 ~~criteria established by federal and state regulations to~~ [who](#) qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

12 The state of Rhode Island shall provide additional funds to public schools in an amount equal to  
13 the difference between the federal reimbursement rate for a free lunch and the federal  
14 reimbursement rate received for each student eligible for a reduced-price lunch and receiving lunch.

15 The requirement that [free breakfast and](#) reimbursable lunches be provided shall apply to locally  
16 managed school lunch programs, and school [breakfast and](#) lunch programs administered directly  
17 by the department of elementary and secondary education or by any other public agency whether  
18 using school facilities or a commercial catering service. The department of elementary and  
19 secondary education is further authorized to expand the school [breakfast and](#) lunch programs ~~to the~~

1 ~~extent that federal, state, and/or local funds are available~~ by the utilization of one or more food  
2 preparation centers for delivery to participating schools for the purpose of providing meals to  
3 students on a more economical basis than could be provided by a community acting individually.

4 **16-8-10.1. Mandatory school breakfast programs.**

5 (a) All public elementary and secondary schools shall be required to make federally  
6 reimbursable school breakfasts available to students attending those schools through the USDA's  
7 School Breakfast Program (SBP) in accordance with federal regulation as well as rules and  
8 regulations that are adopted from time to time by the department of elementary and secondary  
9 education and in compliance with the provisions of § 16-8-10. ~~To the extent that federal, state, and~~  
10 ~~other funds are available, free~~ Free reimbursable breakfasts shall be provided to all students ~~from~~  
11 ~~families that meet the current specific criteria established by federal and state regulations to~~ who  
12 qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The state of Rhode Island shall provide additional funds to  
13 public schools in an amount equal to the difference between the federal reimbursement rate  
14 received for a free breakfast and the federal reimbursement rate received for each student eligible  
15 for a reduced-price breakfast and receiving breakfast.

16 (b) The state of Rhode Island shall provide school districts a per-breakfast subsidy for each  
17 breakfast served to students. The general assembly shall annually appropriate some sum and  
18 distribute it based on each district's proportion of the number of breakfasts served in the prior  
19 school year relative to the statewide total in the same year. This subsidy shall augment the nonprofit  
20 school food service account and be used for expenses incurred in providing nutritious breakfast  
21 meals to students.

22 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- FEDERAL AID

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- 1           This act would require free breakfast and lunches to be provided to elementary and
- 2 secondary students attending public schools.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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