

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

S.F. No. 5067

(SENATE AUTHORS: KUNESH)

DATE
03/18/2024

D-PG
12414

Introduction and first reading
Referred to Education Finance

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education finance; prohibiting a school district from using a collections
1.3 agency to collect unpaid school meals debt; canceling student unpaid school meals
1.4 debt; amending Minnesota Statutes 2023 Supplement, section 124D.111,
1.5 subdivision 1, by adding a subdivision.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2023 Supplement, section 124D.111, subdivision 1, is
1.8 amended to read:

1.9 Subdivision 1. **School meals policies.** (a) Each Minnesota participant in the national
1.10 school lunch program must adopt and post to its website, or the website of the organization
1.11 where the meal is served, a school meals policy.

1.12 (b) The policy must be in writing and clearly communicate student meal charges when
1.13 payment cannot be collected at the point of service. The policy must be reasonable and
1.14 well-defined and maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming or otherwise
1.15 ostracizing the student.

1.16 ~~(e) The policy must address whether the participant uses a collections agency to collect~~
1.17 ~~unpaid school meals debt.~~

1.18 ~~(d)~~ (c) The policy must ensure that once a participant has placed a meal on a tray or
1.19 otherwise served the meal to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from
1.20 the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an
1.21 outstanding meals balance.

2.1 ~~(e)~~ (d) The policy must ensure that a student who has been determined eligible for free
2.2 and reduced-price meals must always be served a reimbursable meal even if the student has
2.3 an outstanding debt.

2.4 ~~(f)~~ (e) If a school contracts with a third party for its meal services, it must provide the
2.5 vendor with its school meals policy. Any contract between the school and a third-party
2.6 provider entered into or modified after July 1, 2021, must ensure that the third-party provider
2.7 adheres to the participant's school meals policy.

2.8 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2024.

2.9 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2023 Supplement, section 124D.111, is amended by adding a
2.10 subdivision to read:

2.11 Subd. 4a. **Debt collection.** A Minnesota participant in the national school lunch program
2.12 may not engage a public or private collection agency or other third party to collect unpaid
2.13 school meals debt.

2.14 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2024.

2.15 Sec. 3. **UNPAID SCHOOL MEALS DEBT CANCELED.**

2.16 (a) On June 30, 2024, a Minnesota participant in the national school lunch program must
2.17 cancel any unpaid amounts owed on that date to the participant which are attributable to
2.18 food service sales to pupils, including amounts attributable to school breakfast, school lunch,
2.19 and a la carte sales.

2.20 (b) Paragraph (a) does not apply to amounts owed to the participant attributable to food
2.21 service sales to adults or special function food sales.

2.22 (c) This section does not restrict a participant from recording the unpaid amounts
2.23 attributable to food service sales to pupils occurring after June 30, 2024.

2.24 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.