

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 308

5 By: Senators J. Dismang, C. Tucker
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT CONCERNING FEDERALLY FUNDED CHILD NUTRITION
9 PROGRAMS; TO CREATE A MEANS BY WHICH STUDENTS WHO
10 QUALIFY FOR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS AT SCHOOL RECEIVE
11 FREE MEALS AT SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

14 TO CREATE A MEANS BY WHICH STUDENTS WHO
15 QUALIFY FOR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS AT SCHOOL
16 RECEIVE FREE MEALS AT SCHOOL.
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 18, Subchapter 7, is amended
23 to add an additional section to read as follows:

24 6-18-720. Free and reduced-price meals.

25 (a) Federal funds appropriated to the Department of Education for a
26 child nutrition program shall be used to provide school breakfasts and
27 lunches at no cost to each qualifying student.

28 (b) If funds appropriated to the department for a child nutrition
29 program are insufficient to provide a school meal at no cost as required
30 under subsection (a) of this section, the department shall use funds
31 appropriated to the Public School Fund Account to provide school meals not
32 initially covered by federal funds under subsection (a) of this section.

33 (c)(1) Annually by November 15, the State Board of Education shall
34 report to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on
35 Education an overview of each child nutrition program offered in public
36 schools.



1 (2) The report required under subdivision (c)(1) of this section
2 shall include without limitation:

3 (A) The procedure for applying for free or reduced-price
4 meals in public schools; and

5 (B) The number of students who:

6 (i) Apply for free or reduced-price meals;

7 (ii) Are accepted to receive free or reduced-price
8 meals;

9 (iii) Are denied from receiving free or reduced-
10 price meals; and

11 (iv) Automatically qualify for free or reduced-price
12 meals based on federal eligibility requirements.

13 (d)(1) The Auditor of State shall audit the Arkansas Department of
14 Education Child Nutrition Unit by December 15, 2023, and report to the House
15 Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education.

16 (2) The audit required under subdivision (d)(1) of this section
17 shall determine whether each public school's participation in a child
18 nutrition program effectively:

19 (A) Serves the intent of the General Assembly to expand
20 students' access to free meals in public schools; and

21 (B) Complies with federal and state law and rules.

22 (e) As used in this section:

23 (1) "Child nutrition program" includes the following as
24 established under the National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq., as
25 it existed on January 1, 2023:

26 (A) The National School Lunch Program; or

27 (B) The School Breakfast Program; and

28 (2) "Qualifying student" means a kindergarten through grade
29 twelve (K-12) student enrolled in a public school who is eligible for receipt
30 of a reduced-price meal in a child nutrition program.

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