

HB 908 -- SCHOOL MEALS

SPONSOR: Mackey

This bill requires schools to provide a United States Department of Agriculture reimbursable meal to any student who requests one regardless of whether the student cannot pay for a meal or owes money for earlier meals, unless the student's parent or guardian has provided written permission to withhold a meal. Schools may not require a student to throw a meal away because of inability to pay for the meal or because of a meal debt, nor may they publicly stigmatize or identify students.

The bill also specifies that if a student owes money for five or more meals, the school must determine if the student is eligible for free meals, attempt to have the student's parent or guardian fill out a meal application, and contact the student's parent or guardian to offer assistance with a meal application.

The bill also requires schools to direct communication about a student's meal debt to a parent or guardian, not the student. Schools may not require a parent or guardian to pay fees or costs from collection agencies hired to collect meal debts or refuse to provide a student's transcript solely because of a debt.

This bill is similar to HB 1938 (2022) and HB 122 (2021).