

HB 977 -- MISSOURI UNIVERSAL SCHOOL MEALS ACT

SPONSOR: Mosley

This bill establishes the "Missouri Universal School Meals Act".

Subject to appropriations, schools shall provide a U.S. Department of Agriculture reimbursable meal to a student who requests one, at no cost to the student, unless the student's parent or guardian provides notice to the school that the parent or guardian will provide the student's meal. A school shall determine which students are eligible for free and reduced price meals under the federal student meals programs and shall provide information and assistance to parents and guardians for purposes of filling out meal assistance applications. Schools shall seek to maximize federal meal assistance, but shall not publicly identify or stigmatize students who are eligible for such assistance.

This bill creates the "Universal School Meals Fund", which shall be used to reimburse schools for the costs of student meals that are not otherwise reimbursed under the federal meals programs. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to implement the program, including the process by which schools may apply for reimbursement of student meals.

This bill is the same as SB 321 (2023).