

HB 285 -- BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

SPONSOR: Proudie

This bill requires a public or charter school to offer "breakfast after the bell" as defined in the bill beginning in the 2025-26 school year if 70% or more of the school's students were eligible for free or reduced price meals in the previous year, the school uses the United States Department of Agriculture Community Eligibility Option, or the school has an individual site percentage for free or reduced price meals of 70% or more and is a Provision 2 school as described in 7 CFR 245.9.

Any school in which 70% or more of its students who are eligible for free or reduced price meals are already participating in the School Breakfast Program will not be required to offer breakfast after the bell.

If a school initially required to offer breakfast after the bell falls below the 70% threshold the school must continue to offer breakfast after the bell for two consecutive years and if during the second year the school does not meet the requirements the school may stop serving breakfast after the bill at the end of the two-year period. If the school becomes eligible they must begin serving breakfast after the bill.

Schools must offer breakfast after the bell to all students in the school, including students who arrive late or by a different mode of transportation than most students. Schools may choose a service model that best suits their students, including breakfast in the classroom or breakfast after first period.

Schools can not be required to offer breakfast after the bell if the Federal per-meal reimbursements for free or reduced price breakfasts are decreased below 2025 levels or if the program is eliminated by Congress.

The bill also requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to notify schools required to offer breakfast after the bell; recognize up to 15 minutes spent by students consuming breakfast as instructional time if the students receive instruction while consuming breakfast in the classroom; assist schools as specified in the bill; collect information as specified in the bill; and submit a report each year on or before December 31st, to the General Assembly on the implementation and effectiveness of the provisions of the bill.

This bill is similar to HB 1899 (2024) and to HB 446 (2023).