

HB 873 -- PUBLIC SCHOOL LUNCHES

SPONSOR: Zimmermann

This bill establishes the "Missouri Free School Meals Program" to reimburse schools for providing free breakfasts and lunches to all students, regardless of whether those students are eligible for free meals under federal guidelines.

The bill requires a school that participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch Program but is not eligible to have all student meals reimbursed at the free rate through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision to participate in the Missouri Free School Meals Program. Such a school must provide to all students at no cost up to two meals per school day, with a maximum of one free breakfast and one free lunch.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must reimburse a school that participates in the Missouri Free School Meals Program in an amount equal to the difference between the federal reimbursement rate for a free meal and the actual reimbursement received by the school.

This bill is similar to SB 172 (2025).