



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 929

LCO No. 3267



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

***AN ACT EXPANDING SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE
FREE SCHOOL MEALS TO ALL STUDENTS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-215 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

3 (a) [Any] Each local [or] and regional board of education [may] shall
4 establish and operate a school lunch program for public school children,
5 may operate lunch services for its employees, may establish and operate
6 a school breakfast program, as provided under federal laws governing
7 said programs, or may establish and operate such other child feeding
8 programs as it deems necessary. [Charges] No board may charge for
9 such school lunches, school breakfasts or other such child feeding. [may
10 be fixed by such boards and shall not exceed the cost of food, wages and
11 other expenses directly incurred in providing such services.] When such
12 [services] programs are offered, a board shall provide free school
13 lunches, school breakfasts or other such child feeding to [children whose
14 economic needs require such action under the standards promulgated
15 by said federal laws] all students. Such board is authorized to purchase

16 equipment and supplies that are necessary, to employ the necessary
17 personnel, to utilize the services of volunteers and to receive and expend
18 any funds and receive and use any equipment and supplies which may
19 become available to carry out the provisions of this section. Any town
20 board of education may vote to designate any volunteer organization
21 within the town to provide a school lunch program, school breakfast
22 program or other child feeding program in accordance with the
23 provisions of this section.

24 [(b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each school
25 year thereafter, a local or regional board of education shall include in
26 any policy or procedure for the collection of unpaid charges for school
27 lunches, breakfasts or other such feeding applicable to employees and
28 third-party vendors of such school lunches, breakfasts or such feeding
29 (1) a prohibition on publicly identifying or shaming a child for any such
30 unpaid charges, including, but not limited to, delaying or refusing to
31 serve a meal to such child, designating a specific meal option for such
32 child or otherwise taking any disciplinary action against such child, (2)
33 a declaration of the right for any child to purchase a meal, which meal
34 may exclude any a la carte items or be limited to one meal for any school
35 lunch, breakfast or other such feeding, and (3) a procedure for
36 communicating with the parent or legal guardian of a child for the
37 purpose of collecting such unpaid charges. Such communication shall
38 include, but not be limited to, (A) information regarding local food
39 pantries, (B) applications for the school district's program for free or
40 reduced priced meals and for the supplemental nutrition assistance
41 program administered by the Department of Social Services, and (C) a
42 link to the Internet web site maintained by the town for such school
43 district listing any community services available to the residents of such
44 town. In the event the unpaid charges for school lunches, breakfasts or
45 other such feeding due from any parent or legal guardian are equal to
46 or more than the cost of thirty meals, the local or regional board of
47 education shall refer such parent or legal guardian to the local homeless
48 education liaison designated by such board, pursuant to Subtitle B of
49 Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 USC 11431

50 et seq., as amended from time to time.]

51 [(c)] (b) A local or regional board of education may accept gifts,
52 donations or grants from any public or private sources for the purpose
53 of [paying off any unpaid charges for] providing such school lunches,
54 school breakfasts or other such child feeding.

55 Sec. 2. Section 10-215b of the general statutes is repealed and the
56 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

57 (a) The State Board of Education [is authorized to expend in each
58 fiscal year, within available appropriations,] shall annually provide
59 grants to local and regional boards of education, the Technical
60 Education and Career System and the governing authority of a state
61 charter school, interdistrict magnet school or endowed academy
62 approved pursuant to section 10-34 that participates in the National
63 School Lunch Program and operates a school lunch program, school
64 breakfast program or other child feeding program pursuant to section
65 10-215, as amended by this act, provided the state board expends in each
66 fiscal year an amount equal to (1) the money required pursuant to the
67 matching requirements of said federal laws and shall disburse the same
68 in accordance with said laws, and (2) at least ten cents per lunch served
69 in the prior school year in accordance with said laws. [by any local or
70 regional board of education, the Technical Education and Career System
71 or governing authority of a state charter school, interdistrict magnet
72 school or endowed academy approved pursuant to section 10-34 that
73 participates in the National School Lunch Program and certifies] Each
74 such board, system and governing authority shall certify, pursuant to
75 section 10-215f, that the nutrition standards established by the
76 Department of Education, pursuant to section 10-215e, [shall be] have
77 been met.

78 (b) The State Board of Education shall prescribe the manner and time
79 of application by such board of education, the Technical Education and
80 Career System, such governing authority or controlling authority of the
81 nonpublic schools for such funds, provided such application shall

82 include the certification that any funds received pursuant to subsection
83 (a) of this section shall be used for the program approved. The State
84 Board of Education shall determine the eligibility of the applicant to
85 receive such grants pursuant to regulations provided in subsection (c)
86 of this section and shall certify to the Comptroller the amount of the
87 grant for which the board of education, the Technical Education and
88 Career System, the governing authority or the controlling authority of a
89 nonpublic school is eligible. Upon receipt of such certification, the
90 Comptroller shall draw an order on the Treasurer in the amount, at the
91 time and to the payee so certified.

92 (c) The State Board of Education may adopt such regulations as may
93 be necessary in implementing sections 10-215 to 10-215b, inclusive, as
94 amended by this act.

95 (d) The Commissioner of Education shall establish a procedure for
96 monitoring compliance by boards of education, the Technical Education
97 and Career System, or governing authorities with certifications
98 submitted in accordance with section 10-215f and may adjust grant
99 amounts pursuant to [subdivision (2) of] subsection (a) of this section
100 based on failure to comply with [said] such certification.

101 (e) The Commissioner of Education may temporarily waive any
102 provision or modify any requirements of this section or section 10-215,
103 as amended by this act, 10-215a, 10-215e or 10-215f, in response to any
104 changes in federal law or waivers issued by the United States
105 Department of Agriculture, to ensure that local and regional boards of
106 education continue to receive the funds described in this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	10-215
Sec. 2	July 1, 2023	10-215b

Statement of Purpose:

To provide free school meals to all students.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]