



STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

State Board of Education

**Resolution on the Expiration of Federal Waivers
for Child Nutrition Programs on Proposed Ballot Initiative**

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has not extended the waiver authority of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for child nutrition programs;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will no longer have authority to provide higher meal reimbursement rates, allow all schools to serve free meals to all students, or extend the broad regulatory flexibility on which these programs have relied for the last two years;

WHEREAS, the loss of the waivers beginning with the end of this school year means meals must be congregate (meals may no longer be sent home), must meet all meal pattern requirements to receive reimbursement (regardless of supply chain shortages), and must be reimbursed at approximately \$1.65 per meal less than they are now;

WHEREAS, unless a school building participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all meals will return to being reduced-price or paid for those families who do not qualify for free meals;

WHEREAS, with labor shortages and food price increases, many districts will likely need to raise paid meal prices, which will create a significant burden for families not qualified for free or reduced-price meals;

WHEREAS, in Michigan, this change would mean that fewer children will have access to meals in schools - meals that help ensure children are well fed and ready to learn, a key strategy that supports Goal 3 of Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan of improving the health, safety, and wellness of all learners. In addition, schools will face additional bureaucratic challenges to providing meals to eligible students while still working to address the needs of children coming out of the global pandemic. For the summer of 2022 alone, it is estimated that over 20% of Summer Food Service Program sponsors will not qualify to provide free meals, which will leave approximately 100,000 Michigan children without access to meals beginning in June;

WHEREAS, while some aspects related to the COVID-19 pandemic are improving, the school food supply chain and staffing shortages have not yet recovered, and schools desperately need more time to adjust;

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • 833-633-5788

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the State Board of Education strongly supports the bipartisan Kids Not Red Tape Act of 2022, introduced by U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow and U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, to extend USDA school meal flexibilities from June 30, 2022, to September 30, 2023, to give schools and families time to adjust to the changes as schools return to more normal operations.

Adopted June 14, 2022