



## **State School Meal Mandates and Reimbursements: School Year 2014-2015**

*The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) are federally funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The purpose of the school nutrition programs is to provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals to children each school day. Each year, USDA sets rates to cover the cost of free and reduced meals, as well as some additional support for paid meals.*

*Each state is also required to provide a certain matching amount based on a rate set in the 1980's. Many states provide additional reimbursement on top of the matching requirement, which can range from per meal reimbursements, to salary support, to general funds to assist with program operations.*

*It is up to each state if participation in these programs is optional or mandated resulting in diverse circumstances. According to the findings, 19 states require their schools provide a lunch with five of those mandating the lunch be NSLP. For breakfast, 29 states have some requirement for providing the meal with 12 mandating the federal program.*

*This report is a comprehensive summary of each State's mandates and financial support with an additional chart for brief reference. The information reflected in this document is to the best of SNA's knowledge and subject to change.*

### **Alabama**

Alabama does not mandate that schools participate in either the NSLP or SBP. While the State does not provide a per meal reimbursement, it does provide a substantial amount of funding including 100% of the cost of employee fringe benefits in addition to the amount of the mandated raise per individual.

### **Alaska**

Alaska does not mandate school meal programs and does not provide meal reimbursements. However, the legislature does provide foundation formula state funds to all school districts, and the districts may choose to use some of the funds toward their school meals programs.

### **Arizona**

The state does mandate that all K-8 schools with an enrollment over 100 students participate in the NSLP. There is no mandate for breakfast. It provides additional non-meal funding for nutrition programs.

### **Arkansas**

Arkansas does not have a mandate for the NSLP. Arkansas requires all schools with 20% or more of the students eligible for free and reduced meals to participate in the SBP. In 2013, Arkansas passed a pilot school breakfast expansion program with a \$1 million grant to cover startup costs. There are no additional reimbursements.

**California**

California requires that all public schools must provide at least one nutritious meal (meeting federal standards) to all free or reduced priced meal eligible students. The law also requires that severe-need schools have a breakfast program. California provides an additional reimbursement with state funds and provides support for schools not participating in the National programs. For the 2014-2015 school year, the reimbursement rate is \$0.28 for each qualifying free or reduced price meal (breakfast and lunch) served in public schools.

**Colorado**

Colorado does not mandate school districts to participate in the NSLP. Colorado established the Start Smart Program that reimburses school districts for the \$.30-cent co-pay that families would otherwise have to pay for a reduced breakfast. Beginning in 2014, schools with 80% free/reduced priced enrollment will have to provide breakfast after the bell free of charge to all students. In early 2014, it passed a bill that covers the lunch price of \$.40 for grades PK-5.

**Connecticut**

There is no mandate that a school must participate in the NSLP. However, if 80% of school lunches served in any elementary school are served to children eligible for free or reduced price meals, that school must offer SBP. All public schools that participate in the NSLP can receive additional reimbursement of \$.10 per reimbursable meal if they provide yearly certification under the Healthy Food Certification Process. State reimbursement is provided to State-defined severe need breakfast eligible schools for school breakfast programs to equal \$3,000/year and up to \$.10 for each breakfast served (based on the level of appropriations this has equaled around \$.045 in recent years).

**Delaware**

Delaware does not have a mandate for schools meals. The State does not provide a per meal reimbursement for breakfast or lunch, but does provide up to 70% of School Food Authorities (SFAs) staff salaries.

**Florida**

All schools must provide a lunch program, but it does not have to be the NSLP. However, all districts that offer the NSLP must provide SBP in elementary schools. Breakfast programs shall be offered at no cost to the students in schools in which 80% or more of the students enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The State provides cafeteria inspection funds to help offset the cost to public schools that operate the NSLP.

**Georgia**

Georgia requires all schools to participate in a state approved school nutrition program that at a minimum is lunch, but it does not have to be the NSLP. Georgia also mandates that schools with grades K-8 must establish and support a breakfast program if at least 25% of the student population is eligible for free or reduced price lunch. For all other grades, a breakfast program is required if at least 40% of the student population receives free or reduced meals. The State supplements federal reimbursement by base salary assistance for full-time school lunch staff; sick day pay assistance for school lunch staff; and a manager's supplement.

**Hawaii**

Hawaii does mandate school lunch and school breakfast, but not participation in the NSLP or SBP. The Hawaii public school meals are paid for by federal reimbursement, revenue collected

by the paying students and the remainder by State funds. Hawaii State funds are budgeted to subsidize the remaining portion of the school meals.

### **Idaho**

There is no state mandate that schools must participate in the NSLP or SBP. The state does provide some additional funding which assists school districts in covering FICA taxes for school nutrition employees.

### **Illinois**

Illinois does not mandate the NSLP, but does require schools provide free lunches to students that qualify. It also requires that schools with 40% or more free or reduced price eligible students must offer a breakfast program the following year. Under the Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Program, reimbursement is paid monthly based on the number of free meals claimed. The reimbursement rate is \$.03 for each free meal served for School Year 2014-2015. **As of March 2015, the rate was lowered to \$.02 per meal.** School districts that offer a summer program and have 50% free and reduced must offer a meal.

### **Indiana**

Indiana does not mandate participation in the NSLP. It does mandate that if a school's enrollment has 15% or more eligible for free or reduced-price meals, it must offer SBP. Indiana does not provide additional state reimbursement.

### **Iowa**

Iowa regulations and rules require all public schools to operate a school lunch program with meals that meet the nutrition standards for the NSLP. It is not mandatory to offer breakfast. Iowa provides \$.04 per lunch and \$.03 for breakfast as long as matching funds last.

### **Kansas**

There is no state mandate for school lunch in Kansas. However, it does require that schools with 35% or more students eligible for free or reduced price meals offer school breakfast. School districts with less than 35% of students eligible for free or reduced price meals can request a waiver asking to be released from this requirement. Kansas provides approximately \$.04 of state reimbursement for each lunch serve, but there is no state reimbursement for breakfast.

### **Kentucky**

Kentucky has no school meals mandates. It also does not provide state reimbursements. Local school districts that do not have breakfast programs must explain their reasons to the State Board of Education.

### **Louisiana**

Louisiana requires all public schools to operate the NSLP, and requires schools with at least 25% of the student body eligible for free and reduced price meals to operate the SBP. It does provide additional, non-meal funds to support school nutrition programs.

### **Maine**

Maine mandates that public schools must participate in the NSLP through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, but secondary schools may opt out. There is no mandate for breakfast. Public schools receive an additional reimbursement of \$.05 per lunch. Maine covers the price of reduced price breakfast for students amounting to \$.30. It also provides grants for the purchase of fruits and vegetables

for schools with more than 50% free and reduced meals and provides \$1 of reimbursement for every \$3 spent on local produce, which is capped at \$1,000 per district per year if funding is available.

### **Maryland**

Maryland law states that each public school shall provide a program of subsidized or free feeding programs for children, but does not require the NSLP. The state also mandates that each county board provide in each elementary school a free and reduced price breakfast, unless the school is exempted. The Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program is funded by the state legislature at \$6.9 million for FY 2014. In participating schools, no child pays for breakfast. State monies reimburse all reduced-price breakfasts at \$.30 and a formula is used to reimburse the paid meals based on the percentage of school enrollment in the free and reduced categories.

<u>Percent of free/reduced</u>	<u>Paid meal reimbursement</u>
40-50 %	\$.85
50+ - 60%	.75
60+ - 70%	.65
70+ - 80%	.55
80+ - 90%	.45
90+ - 100%	.35

### **Massachusetts**

Massachusetts requires all public schools to have a lunch program, but it does not have to be the NLSP. For breakfast, severe needs schools must offer breakfast. For an elementary school that is mandated to serve breakfast, if its breakfast costs exceed the severe needs reimbursement amount, it receives up to \$0.097 per breakfast from the state. Such needs are re-assessed in March, and additional costs are covered if money is available. It does not provide any reimbursement of school lunch.

### **Michigan**

In Michigan, a lunch program is required to be operated in all schools, and a breakfast program in schools where more than 20% of enrolled pupils are eligible for free or reduced meals. Any school not required to have a breakfast program must hold an annual public hearing. Section 31d of the State Aid Act provides funds to schools to assist in operating a school lunch program. The payments made under this section include all state payments made to districts so that each receives up to 6.0127% of the necessary costs of operating the school lunch program.

### **Minnesota**

There is no lunch mandate in Minnesota, but the State requires a breakfast program for schools in which Free/Reduced lunches served is greater than 33% for 2nd prior year. Starting in school year 2014-15, the state will provide \$.40 to cover the cost of reduced price lunches. The state also provides \$.125 for every additional lunch claimed, \$.30 for every reduced price breakfast, \$.55 for every full paid breakfast, and \$.75 for all full paid breakfast meals for kindergartners.

### **Mississippi**

Mississippi has no state meals mandate and does not provide additional state reimbursements.

**Missouri**

Missouri does not mandate school lunch. However, any school in which 35% or more of the enrollment is approved for free and reduced priced meals on Oct. 1 must implement a breakfast program by the following July 1. Schools can apply for a waiver from this requirement. The state provides no additional reimbursement.

**Montana**

Montana has no school meals mandate and does not provide state reimbursements.

**Nebraska**

Nebraska does not mandate lunch or breakfast. State reimbursement in the amount of \$.01 per lunch served in public schools is paid as long as funds are available. State reimbursement in the amount of \$.05 per breakfast served in public schools is paid in the second year after the breakfasts are served.

**Nevada**

Nevada has no state meals mandate and does not provide additional state reimbursements.

**New Hampshire**

New Hampshire has no mandate beyond “public schools must provide a nutritious meal.” The state provides \$.03 for every breakfast meal to schools who participate in NSLP and have an approved wellness policy in place.

**New Jersey**

Any public school with 5% or more students eligible for free or reduced price meals must offer a lunch program that meets USDA standards, and they must offer free and reduced price meals to those that qualify. The program does not have to be the NSLP. Public schools with 20% or more students eligible for free or reduced price meals must implement the SBP. New Jersey no longer provides additional reimbursement for breakfast and reduced support for lunch programs due to budget constraints.

**New Mexico**

There is no state mandate for school lunch in New Mexico. However, beginning School Year 2014-2015, schools with 80% free or reduced must provide breakfast free to all students. Participating schools are reimbursed \$.30 for each breakfast that qualifies as reduced and \$1.58 for those qualifying as paid. There is no meal reimbursement for lunch.

**New York**

New York has no mandate on participation for the school lunch program. Breakfast is mandated for schools at the elementary level (K-6), and middle and high schools with severe need status. Schools can obtain waivers from the breakfast mandate. The State provides the following reimbursement: for lunch, NY provides \$.0599 for each paid meal, \$.1981 for reduced price, and \$.0599 for free meals. For breakfast, the rate is \$.0023 for paid, \$.1566 for reduced and \$.1013 for free.

**North Carolina**

The state requires all public schools to participate in the NSLP, but there is no mandate for breakfast. The state provides no additional funds for lunch, but it uses a portion of the required

state revenue match to provide free breakfast to elementary students that qualify for reduced price meals for schools that participate in the program.

#### **North Dakota**

North Dakota has no meals mandate nor does it provide additional reimbursements.

#### **Ohio**

In Ohio, there is no school lunch mandate. School breakfast is required in schools where at least 20% of the students are eligible for free or reduced meals, or where 50% or more of the students' parents have requested the SBP. Ohio does not provide additional reimbursements.

#### **Oklahoma**

Oklahoma does not mandate school meals. Oklahoma's legislature approves an appropriation each year to reimburse school lunches, amount varying yearly.

#### **Oregon**

Oregon does not have a state mandate for serving lunch. The State does require participation in the SBP if 25% or more students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches. Oregon does not provide per meal reimbursement for breakfast and/or lunch.

#### **Pennsylvania**

There are no mandates requiring schools to provide lunches or breakfasts. Pennsylvania provides additional support for lunch to schools that do provide breakfast. For breakfast, the state provides \$.10 per meal served. For lunch, if a school does not provide breakfast, it receives \$.10, for breakfast provided to less than 20% of students the rate is \$.12, and for breakfast served to more than 20% the rate increases to \$.14.

#### **Rhode Island**

Rhode Island does mandate schools provide lunch and participation SBP. The state provides \$270,000 in reimbursements dispersed in proportion to the number of school breakfasts served.

#### **South Carolina**

South Carolina requires all schools to offer a lunch and participate in the SBP. The state does not provide additional per meal reimbursements.

#### **South Dakota**

South Dakota has no meal mandates and has no additional state reimbursement.

#### **Tennessee**

Tennessee mandates that all school districts provide a school lunch program, but not necessarily the NLSP. Breakfast is mandated in K-8 schools with 25% free or reduced price students and in all other schools that have 40% free or reduced. Tennessee does not offer additional reimbursement.

#### **Texas**

Texas has no mandate for lunch. Beginning in 2014, schools with 80% or more of the students are eligible for a free or reduced-price meal must offer a free breakfast to all students. Texas does mandate that schools with 50% of NSLP participants receiving free or reduced lunch must offer a summer meal program.

**Utah**

Utah has no meal mandates. It uses proceeds from its liquor tax (proceeds vary yearly) to reimburse lunches.

**Vermont**

Vermont requires participation by every school district in the NSLP and SBP, unless the school board votes to exempt the district. If the district is exempt, the school board must vote on this issue every year. Vermont has eliminated the reduced price category by providing the \$.40 to cover costs for lunch and \$.30 breakfast.

**Virginia**

There is no state mandate for schools to participate in the NSLP. Participation in the SBP is required in any public school in which 25% or more are free or reduced price eligible. Virginia has a state breakfast incentive funding program for new breakfast participation where the states provides a reimbursement of \$.22 for each breakfast served in excess of each school division's established baseline per student breakfast meal participation rates.

**Washington State**

School districts must implement any school lunch program where 25% or more of the enrolled students in schools with any grades from K-4 qualify for free or reduced. Breakfast is mandated for public schools with more than 40% qualifying for free or reduced price meals. Summer food service is mandated in each public school where a summer program of academic, enrichment, or remedial services are provided and in which 50% or more of the students enrolled qualify for free or reduced price lunch. The State covers the price of reduced price meals for qualifying students in all grades for breakfast and for students in grades K – 3 for lunch.

**West Virginia**

There is no lunch mandate in West Virginia, but all schools must provide breakfast. There is not an additional state reimbursement for school meals served. West Virginia's "Feed to Achieve" Act aims to provide overall financial support for child nutrition programs.

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin does not have meal mandates and uses a formula to provide additional per meal reimbursement to the extend funds are available. For lunch, the state multiples approximately \$.044 by the number of lunches served to students in the previous year. For breakfast, the state multiplies approximately \$.09 cents by the number of breakfasts served to students in the previous year. This funding is all prorated based on the number of meals served. It can be different every year depending on the number of actual meals served.

**Wyoming**

Wyoming does not have school meal mandates. The state does provide a per meal subsidy for both lunch and breakfast meals to those school districts that have a deficit in their food service operations.

### Reference for Meal Mandates and Reimbursements

Please note that while some states mandate a meal program, not all require the program to be the NSLP or the SBP.

State	Lunch Mandate?	Breakfast Mandate?	Lunch Reimbursement	Breakfast Reimbursement	Other Reimbursement
Alabama	No	No	No	No	100% benefits
Alaska	No	No	No	No	State Formula that can be used towards school meal programs.
Arizona	NSLP for K-8.	No	No	No	Operation of school nutrition programs.
Arkansas	No	SBP if 20% F/R.	No	No	\$1 million grant for breakfast expansion.
California	Yes	In Severe Need Schools.	\$.28	\$.28	Grants for breakfast/summer expansion.
Colorado	No	Must serve <i>free</i> breakfast if 80% f/r.	\$.40 for reduced price meals, K-5.	\$.30 for reduced price meals.	
Connecticut	No	SBP if over 80% f/r.	\$.10 to schools that serve NLSP.	Average of \$.045.	
Delaware	No	No	No	No	State covers up to 70% of SFAs salary.
Florida	Yes	SBP in elementary if offering NSLP.	No	No	Covers inspection costs for schools offering NSLP.
Georgia	Yes	Yes, K-8 if over 25% f/r.	No	No	Assists with salary and benefits of SFAs.
Hawaii	Yes	Yes	No	No	Operation of school nutrition programs.
Idaho	No	No	No	No	Assists with FICA taxes for SFAs.
Illinois	Yes, for free.	Yes, if 40% f/r.	\$.02 (as of 3/15)	\$.02 (as of 3/15)	
Indiana	No	SBP if 15% f/r.	No	No	
Iowa	Yes	No	\$.04	\$.03	

State	Lunch Mandate?	Breakfast Mandate?	Lunch Reimbursement	Breakfast Reimbursement	Other Reimbursement
Kansas	No	Yes, if 35% f/r.	\$.04	No	
Kentucky	No	No	No	No	
Louisiana	NSLP	SBP if 25% f/r.	No	No	Operation of school nutrition programs.
Maine	NSLP, K-8	No	\$.05	\$.30 for reduced price meals.	Covers \$1 for every \$3 spent on local produce and capped at \$1000 per district.
Maryland	Yes	Yes	No	\$.30 for reduced price.	See state summary for breakdown of additional reimbursement.
Massachusetts	Yes	Yes, if 20% f/r.	No	\$0.097	
Michigan	Yes	Yes, if 20% f/r.	No	No	Operation of a school nutrition program.
Minnesota	No	Yes, if 33% f/r.	\$.125 plus \$.40 for reduced price.	\$.30 for reduced price; \$.55 for paid.	All kindergartners receive free breakfast.
Mississippi	No	No	No	No	
Missouri	No	Yes, if 35% f/r.	No	No	
Montana	No	No	No	No	
Nebraska	No	No	\$.01	\$.05	
Nevada	No	No	No	No	
New Hampshire	Yes	No	No	\$.03 if NSLP & Wellness Policy.	
New Jersey	Yes, if 5% f/r.	SBP if 20% f/r.	No	No	
New Mexico	No	Yes, if 80% f/r.	No	If 80% f/r, \$.30 for reduced; \$1.58 paid.	
New York	No	Yes, K-6 & severe need middle & secondary schools.	\$.0599 paid, \$.1981 reduced, & \$.0599 free.	\$.0023 for paid, \$.1566 for reduced and \$.1013 for free.	
North Carolina	NSLP	No	No	\$.30 for reduced meals.	
North Dakota	No	No	No	No	

State	Lunch Mandate?	Breakfast Mandate?	Lunch Reimbursement	Breakfast Reimbursement	Other Reimbursement
Ohio	No	Yes, if 20% f/r.	No	No	
Oklahoma	No	No	Varies	Varies	
Oregon	No	SBP if 25% f/r.	No	No	
Pennsylvania	No	No	Please see state summary for all information.	\$.10	
Rhode Island	Yes	SBP	No	No	\$270,000 for breakfast support.
South Carolina	Yes	SBP	No	No	
South Dakota	No	No	No	No	
Tennessee	Yes	Yes, K-8 if 25% f/r.	No	No	
Texas	No	Yes, <i>free</i> if over 80% f/r.	No	No	
Utah	No	No	Uses proceeds from liquor tax.	No	
Vermont	NSLP	SBP	\$.40 for reduced price.	\$.30 for reduced price.	
Virginia	No	SBP if 25% f/r.	No	\$.22 in certain cases.	
Washington	Yes, if 25% f/r.	Yes, if 40% f/r.	\$.40 for reduced price for K-3.	\$.30 for reduced price.	
West Virginia	No	SBP	No	No	Operation of school nutrition programs.
Wisconsin	No	No	\$.04	\$.09	
Wyoming	No	No	No	No	Operation of school nutrition program.

**Totals:**

States With A *Lunch* Mandate: 19

- NSLP Mandate: 5

States With A *Breakfast* Mandate: 29

- SBP Mandate: 12