

TENNESSEE CHILD NUTRITION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) establishes the minimum national standards that schools participating in the

National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other federal meal programs must meet in order to obtain reimbursement. However, states can provide additional requirements and standards for school nutrition programs. Below is a snapshot of the policies for Tennessee. Also included are resources on the State legislature to assist SNA members interested in making an impact as the State crafts future policies. More information on Tennessee can be found with the [State agency](#) or by viewing the latest data available from [USDA](#).

Current and Recent Legislation

- In 2014, the House Education Committee took up, but failed to pass a bill simplifying the free and reduced meals application form.
- In 2015, the Governor signed a law allowing all schools to opt out federal programs without penalty, including school meal programs.

School Meal Policies

- Tennessee requires schools offer a lunch program and a breakfast program for grades K-8 if the school is 25% free and reduced. For those schools not containing grades K-8, a breakfast program is required when 40% or more of students are free and reduced.
- The State does not provide additional per meal reimbursement.
- A 2006 law requires all school districts have an allergy plan in place.

Competitive Foods/Smart Snacks Fundraisers

- Tennessee first developed nutritional standards for foods sold in schools in 2000. The Smart Snacks policy replaces the state law.
- For fundraising, the State allows 30 Smart Snacks exempt events per building per year.

Farm to School

- There is currently no law in place on Farm to School policies.

The Tennessee General Assembly

- The state legislature is limited to ninety days over two years. If they exceed the limit, legislators can no longer draw down expenses.
- The rules for lobbying in Tennessee can be found [here](#).