

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS TO PROVIDE 100% FREE BREAKFAST AND LUNCH TO ALL OHIO STUDENTS

The State Board of Education (“Board”) **APPROVES** a recommendation to the General Assembly for the use of American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to provide free breakfast and lunch to all Ohio students as follows:

In school years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 the United States Department of Agriculture authorized nutrition program regulations waivers allowing schools and districts to offer no-cost meals to all students and claim the meals at the federal free meal rate.

In school year 2021-2022, 90,443,684 breakfasts and 171,246,917 lunches were served under the no-cost meals waivers, meal counts substantially higher than pre-pandemic program meal counts demonstrating the model promotes student meal participation.

The United States Department of Agriculture waivers which authorized no-cost meals for all students in the school lunch and school breakfast programs expired June 30, 2022.

Offering no-cost meals to all students eliminates the stigma of program participation, promotes consumption of healthy breakfasts and lunches to support a ready learning environment, in studies is found to improve dietary intake and provides additional funding to school food service programs to offset elevated food and supply costs related to inflation.

California, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada and Vermont passed legislation supporting no-cost meals for all students for school breakfast and school lunch programs in school year 2022-2023. Pennsylvania passed legislation approving no-cost school breakfast for all students in school year 2022-2023.

In July, the Hunger-Free Schools Ohio coalition sent Governor DeWine a letter requesting action to continue to provide healthy school meals for all Ohio children. The coalition has over 35 community stakeholder member organizations such as the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board recommends to the General Assembly the use of a portion of the remaining State and Local Fiscal Recovery funds allocated by the federal government through the American Rescue Plan to provide 100% free breakfast and lunch to all Ohio students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board hereby directs the Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction to prepare correspondence, subject to the approval of the President of the Board, to the Primary and Secondary Education Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives and the Primary and Secondary Education Committee of the Ohio Senate containing the recommendation approved herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Interim Superintendent submit the recommendation to the aforementioned committees of the General Assembly and take any appropriate action to advocate for its adoption.