

ASSEMBLY, No. 3682

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Requires public schools to comply with more stringent school lunch and breakfast nutrition standards adopted by USDA in 2012.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/18/2021)

1 **AN ACT** concerning school lunch and breakfast nutrition standards
2 and supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Child and adolescent obesity has reached epidemic levels in
9 the United States and poor diet combined with the lack of physical
10 activity negatively impacts students' health and their ability and
11 motivation to learn.

12 b. In New Jersey, the current obesity rate for children and
13 adolescents between the ages of 10 and 17 is 14.8 percent, which is
14 the 28th highest child and adolescent obesity rate in the nation.

15 c. Over the past 15 years, policymakers have taken significant
16 steps to implement new approaches through the National School
17 Lunch Program and federal School Breakfast Program in order to
18 address child and adolescent obesity.

19 d. Federally subsidized meal programs, which include the
20 National School Lunch and federal School Breakfast Program, are
21 required to have nutrition standards that meet specific dietary
22 guidelines. These guidelines can help prevent chronic diseases like
23 obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and Type 2 diabetes.

24 e. Under the nutrition regulations adopted in July 2012 under
25 the federal "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010," public
26 schools were required to reduce the amount of calories, fat, and
27 sodium in school cafeterias and increase offerings of whole grains,
28 fruits and vegetables, and nonfat milk to the roughly 32 million
29 students who receive federally subsidized meals.

30 f. Public schools have worked diligently to overcome
31 operational challenges in the National School Lunch and federal
32 School Breakfast Programs created by meeting sodium, whole
33 grain-rich, and milk requirements and, by 2016, at least 90 percent
34 of schools were compliant in every state.

35 g. These more stringent nutrition standards have helped to
36 reduce the obesity rate for children and adolescents between the
37 ages of 10 and 17.

38 h. However, the United States Department of Agriculture has
39 recently announced its plans to lower nutrition standards for grains,
40 flavored milks, and sodium in school cafeterias that were part of the
41 regulations adopted in 2012 under the "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids
42 Act of 2010."

43 i. Beginning next school year, schools can request an
44 exemption from the whole grain requirements and delay the sodium
45 mandate and schools will also be able to serve one percent flavored
46 milk instead of nonfat.

47 j. It is important for public schools in the State to abide by the
48 more stringent nutrition regulations that were adopted in 2012 under

1 the “Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010” in order for the State
2 to continue to reduce the obesity rate for children and adolescents.

3
4 2. a. A public school shall comply with the nutrition
5 standards for the National School Lunch Program and federal
6 School Breakfast Program adopted by the United States Department
7 of Agriculture, as published in Volume 77, Number 17 of the
8 Federal Register dated January 26, 2012, or any more stringent
9 nutrition standards.

10 b. All reimbursable meals under the National School Lunch
11 Program and the federal School Breakfast Program shall comply
12 with the nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program
13 and federal School Breakfast Program adopted by the United States
14 Department of Agriculture, as published in Volume 77, Number 17
15 of the Federal Register dated January 26, 2012, or any more
16 stringent nutrition standards.

17
18 3. This act shall take effect immediately.
19
20

21 STATEMENT
22

23 This bill would require all public schools to comply with the
24 previous nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program
25 and federal School Breakfast Program that were adopted by the
26 United States Department of Agriculture and published in Volume
27 77, Number 17 of the Federal Register dated January 26, 2012, or
28 any more stringent nutrition standards.

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30 United States and poor diet combined with the lack of physical
31 activity negatively impacts students’ health and their ability and
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35 Program and federal School Breakfast Program in order to address
36 child and adolescent obesity. Federally subsidized meal programs,
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38 Breakfast Program, are required to have nutrition standards that
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