

REFERENCE TITLE: pupils; unpaid school meal fees

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-sixth Legislature
First Regular Session
2023

HB 2353

Introduced by
Representatives Contreras P: Aguilar, Austin, Bravo, Cano, Gress,
Gutierrez, Ortiz, Sandoval, Schwiebert, Seaman, Stahl Hamilton, Sun,
Terech, Travers

AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY
ADDING SECTION 15-116.01; RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Title 15, chapter 1, article 1, Arizona Revised
3 Statutes, is amended by adding section 15-116.01, to read:

4 15-116.01. School meals; unpaid fees; school meal fee debt
5 fund

6 A. A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL ENSURE THAT A PUPIL WHOSE PARENT OR
7 GUARDIAN HAS NOT PAID THE PUPIL'S SCHOOL MEAL FEES IS NOT SHAMED, TREATED
8 DIFFERENTLY OR SERVED A MEAL THAT DIFFERS FROM WHAT A PUPIL WHO DOES NOT
9 HAVE UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL FEES RECEIVES UNDER THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL'S POLICY.
10 THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT PROHIBIT A SCHOOL FROM SERVING AN ALTERNATIVE
11 MEAL TO A PUPIL WHO REQUIRES A SPECIAL MEAL FOR A DIETARY OR RELIGIOUS
12 REASON.

13 B. SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND VOLUNTEERS AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT SERVES
14 MEALS THAT MEET THE NUTRITION STANDARDS PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 15-242 TO
15 PUPILS DURING THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY MAY NOT TAKE DISCIPLINARY ACTION
16 AGAINST A PUPIL THAT RESULTS IN THE DENIAL OR DELAY OF A MEAL THAT MEETS
17 THE NUTRITION STANDARDS PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 15-242.

18 C. A PUBLIC SCHOOL MAY NOT REQUIRE A PUPIL WHO CANNOT PAY FOR A
19 MEAL OR WHO OWES UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL FEES TO PERFORM CHORES OR OTHER WORK
20 TO PAY FOR MEALS.

21 D. A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL NOTIFY A PUPIL'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN
22 REGARDING THE PUPIL'S OUTSTANDING SCHOOL MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCE WITHIN TEN
23 DAYS AFTER THE PUPIL'S MEAL ACCOUNT REACHES A NEGATIVE BALANCE. BEFORE
24 SENDING THIS NOTIFICATION TO THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN, THE PUBLIC SCHOOL
25 SHALL EXHAUST ALL OPTIONS AND METHODS TO DIRECTLY CERTIFY THE PUPIL FOR
26 FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS. IF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IS NOT ABLE TO DIRECTLY
27 CERTIFY THE PUPIL, THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL:

28 1. PROVIDE THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN WITH A PAPER COPY OF OR AN
29 ELECTRONIC LINK TO AN APPLICATION FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS ALONG
30 WITH NOTIFICATION OF THE PUPIL'S OUTSTANDING SCHOOL MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCE.

31 2. SUBSEQUENTLY CONTACT THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO ENCOURAGE THE
32 PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE
33 MEALS.

34 E. A PUBLIC SCHOOL MAY ATTEMPT TO COLLECT UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL FEES
35 FROM A PARENT OR GUARDIAN BUT MAY NOT USE A DEBT COLLECTOR, AS DEFINED IN
36 THE CONSUMER CREDIT PROTECTION ACT (P.L. 90-321; 82 STAT. 146; 15 UNITED
37 STATES CODE SECTION 1692a), FOR THIS PURPOSE.

38 F. THIS SECTION DOES NOT ALLOW FOR THE INDEFINITE ACCRUAL OF A
39 PUPIL'S UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL FEES.

40 G. A SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD OR A CHARTER SCHOOL GOVERNING
41 BODY MAY ESTABLISH A SCHOOL MEAL FEE DEBT FUND CONSISTING OF DONATIONS OR
42 GIFTS TO BE USED TO PAY PUPILS' UNPAID SCHOOL MEAL FEES.