

MAR 07 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE A DETAILED REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE ON THE TRUE COST OF PRODUCING SCHOOL MEALS TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY AND AVOID UNNECESSARY PRICE INCREASES.

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Education is responsible for
2 ensuring that students have access to nutritious and affordable
3 meals; and

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5 WHEREAS, the State receives federal reimbursement for
6 school meals through participation in the School Breakfast
7 Program, National School Lunch Program, and other school meal
8 reimbursement programs; and

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10 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has proposed an
11 increase in school meal prices, which would lead to an increase
12 in the price of student lunch from \$2.50 to \$4.75 for grades K-8
13 and from \$2.75 to \$5.00 for grades 9-12 by the 2028-2029 school
14 year; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Department of Education cites the current cost
17 of producing a student lunch at \$9.00; and

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19 WHEREAS, section 302A-405, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
20 requires the Department of Education to ensure that monies
21 received from the sale of school meals are at least one-half the
22 cost of preparing the meals; and

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24 WHEREAS, there is currently no reporting system in the
25 Department of Education's budgeting process to provide itemized
26 cost breakdowns for school meals; and

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28 WHEREAS, increasing prices for school meals negatively
29 impacts Hawaii's working families and students that receive free
30 or reduced-price meals; and

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1 WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the State to address
2 food insecurity and provide access to free and reduced-price
3 school meals; and

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5 WHEREAS, it is essential to ensure that proper reporting
6 processes are in place to provide transparency as to the costs
7 of producing school meals; now, therefore,

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9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
10 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
11 that the Department of Education is urged to provide a detailed
12 report to the Legislature on the true cost of producing school
13 meals to ensure transparency and avoid unnecessary price
14 increases; and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
17 requested to include the current cost breakdown to produce
18 school meals for the 2024-2025 school year and projected cost
19 breakdown for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years in the
20 report, including:

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22 (1) The costs of ingredients, including an indication of
23 whether each ingredient is locally sourced;
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25 (2) Operational costs;
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27 (3) Beverage costs;
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29 (4) Material and supply costs; and
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31 (5) Logistical and distribution costs; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
34 requested to include data on the number of school meals provided
35 to students for each school year in the report, including the
36 number of:

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38 (1) Full-price meals;
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40 (2) Reduced-price meals;
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42 (3) Free meals;



- 1
- 2 (4) Total meals subject to federal reimbursement;
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- 4 (5) Total meals not subject to federal reimbursement;
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- 6 (6) The total number of all student meals; and
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- 8 (7) The total cost of all student meals; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
11 requested to submit a report of its findings and
12 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
13 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
14 the Regular Session of 2026; and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
18 Education and Superintendent of Education.

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21 OFFERED BY:



