
SENATE BILL 5437

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Litzow, McAuliffe, Fain, Billig, Rivers, Hill, Rolfes, Hasegawa, Jayapal, Habib, Kohl-Welles, Chase, Pedersen, and Conway

Read first time 01/21/15. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to breakfast after the bell programs in certain
2 public schools; adding new sections to chapter 28A.235 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds clear evidence
6 that school breakfast is associated with improved outcomes for
7 students, including fewer discipline incidents, better attendance,
8 and improved performance on standardized tests. The legislature
9 acknowledges that many schools currently offer breakfast before the
10 school day. Nevertheless, Washington ranks forty-first in the nation
11 for participation in the national school breakfast program at the
12 same time that childhood poverty and food insecurity are at record
13 highs in the state. While many students eat breakfast at home, there
14 are significant numbers of children who come to school hungry.
15 Therefore, the legislature intends to expand the opportunity for
16 students to get a healthy breakfast by requiring schools with large
17 populations of low-income students who are eligible for free and
18 reduced-price meals to serve breakfast after the bell, a model that
19 has increased breakfast participation rates in various states across
20 the nation.

1 (2) The legislature intends to establish a process for providing
2 breakfast after the bell in high-needs schools beginning in the
3 2016-17 school year and to successfully implement the program by
4 providing technical and marketing assistance through dedicated staff
5 within the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The
6 legislature also intends that breakfast after the bell programs be
7 implemented with the input of families of students at the affected
8 schools.

9 (3) The legislature encourages schools providing breakfast after
10 the bell to use a model that allows breakfast time to be part of
11 instructional time or a model that can be implemented during an
12 existing passing period, such as a nutrition break. As long as
13 breakfast is offered to all students after the instructional day has
14 begun, schools and districts have great flexibility in choosing how
15 to serve breakfast after the bell.

16 (4) Finally, nothing in this act is intended to preempt the
17 responsibility of parents to care for their children, including
18 feeding them nutritious meals before arriving at school. Moreover,
19 the legislature's focus on breakfast after the bell is not intended
20 to indicate interest in ceasing school breakfast programs that offer
21 breakfast before the start of the school day. Rather, it is an
22 attempt to expand opportunities for hungry children to eat breakfast
23 on school days.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.235
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 The definitions in this section apply throughout sections 3 and 4
27 of this act unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

28 (1) "Breakfast after the bell" means a breakfast that is offered
29 to students after the beginning of the school day. Examples of
30 breakfast after the bell models include:

31 (a) "Grab and go," where easy-to-eat breakfast foods are
32 available for students to take at the start of the school day or in
33 between morning classes;

34 (b) "Second chance breakfast," where breakfast foods are
35 available during recess, a nutrition break, or later in the morning,
36 for students who are not hungry first thing in the morning, or who
37 arrive late to school; and

38 (c) "Breakfast in the classroom," where breakfast is served in
39 the classroom, often during homeroom or first period.

1 (2) "Eligible for free or reduced-price meals" means a student
2 who is eligible under the national school lunch program or school
3 breakfast program to receive lunch or breakfast at no cost to the
4 student or at a reduced cost to the student.

5 (3) "High-needs school" means any public school: (a) That has
6 enrollment of seventy percent or more students eligible for free or
7 reduced-price meals in the prior school year; or (b) that is using
8 provision two of the national school lunch act or the community
9 eligibility provision under section 104(a) of the federal healthy,
10 hunger-free kids act of 2010 to provide universal meals and that has
11 a claiming percentage for free or reduced-price meals of seventy
12 percent or more.

13 (4) "Public school" has the same meaning as provided in RCW
14 28A.150.010.

15 (5) "School breakfast program" means a program meeting federal
16 requirements under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1773.

17 (6) "School lunch program" means a program meeting federal
18 requirements under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1751.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.235
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1)(a) Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, except as provided
22 in subsection (2) of this section, each high-needs school shall offer
23 breakfast after the bell to each student and provide adequate time
24 for students to eat. The state shall provide financial assistance to
25 support the costs of implementing breakfast after the bell programs
26 at participating high-needs schools.

27 (b) All public schools are encouraged to offer breakfast after
28 the bell even if not required to do so under this section.

29 (2) High-needs schools with at least seventy percent of free or
30 reduced-price eligible children participating in both school lunch
31 and school breakfast are exempt from the provisions of subsection (1)
32 of this section. The office of the superintendent of public
33 instruction shall evaluate participation rates annually based on
34 guidelines for calculating school breakfast participation rates,
35 issued in consultation with community food and nutrition experts.

36 (3)(a) Each high-needs school may determine the breakfast after
37 the bell service model that best suits its students. Service models
38 include breakfast in the classroom, grab and go breakfast, and second
39 chance breakfast.

1 (b) If all students in a high-needs school are provided the
2 opportunity to engage in educational activity planned by and under
3 the direction of school district staff concurrently with the
4 consumption of breakfast, the period of time designated for student
5 participation in breakfast after the bell shall be considered
6 instructional hours under RCW 28A.150.205.

7 (4) All breakfasts served in a breakfast after the bell program
8 must comply with federal meal patterns and nutrition standards for
9 school breakfast programs under the federal healthy, hunger-free kids
10 act of 2010, (P.L. 111-296) and any federal regulations implementing
11 that act.

12 (5) The legislature does not intend to include the programs under
13 this section within the state's obligation for basic education
14 funding under Article IX of the state Constitution.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.235
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) Before January 2, 2016, the office of the superintendent of
18 public instruction shall develop and distribute procedures and
19 guidelines for the implementation of section 3 of this act, which
20 must be in compliance with federal regulations governing the school
21 breakfast program. These guidelines must include ways schools and
22 districts can solicit and consider the input of families regarding
23 implementation and continued operation of breakfast after the bell
24 programs.

25 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
26 dedicate staff within the office to offer training and technical and
27 marketing assistance to all public schools and school districts
28 related to offering breakfast after the bell, including assistance
29 with various funding options available to high-needs schools,
30 including the community eligibility provision under 42 U.S.C. Sec.
31 1759a(a)(1), programs under provision two of the national school
32 lunch act, and claims for reimbursement under the school breakfast
33 program.

34 (3) In fulfilling its responsibilities under this section, the
35 office of the superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate
36 with nonprofit organizations knowledgeable about equity, the
37 opportunity gap, hunger and food security issues, and best practices
38 for improving student access to school breakfast. The office shall

1 also seek partnerships with philanthropic organizations interested in
2 supporting breakfast after the bell in high-needs schools.

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