



SHAWNEE MISSION

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Senate Bill 387: Verification of at-risk income.

Opponent Written

Dr. Michael Schumacher, Superintendent, Shawnee Mission School District

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Chair Estes and Members of the Committee:

Shawnee Mission School District is opposed to the proposed free meals verification policy change in Senate Bill 387. Similar to most public school districts, the cost and administrative burden of annual verification beyond the federal requirements would be significant, even in the amended version of the bill.

The original bill would require school districts to perform annual verification of the household gross earned income for every student who qualifies for free meals by submitting a National School Lunch Program income application. Federal regulations (7 CFR § 245.6a(c)(3)(iii)) limits verification to verify a sample of applications—usually no more than 3% of approved applications. So this proposed bill is in direct conflict with federal law.

As amended, the bill now pivots to the equally challenging task of determining the income status of all students who receive at-risk services. It is clear this activity, separated from the current free and reduced eligibility based on the federally required 3 percent verification, will create a significant administrative burden, requiring funding and personnel adjustments to administer, again, beyond the federal legal requirements.

In short, this bill would be an additional administrative burden, as well as an unnecessary hurdle for more families to submit written documentations, and likely reduce participation, all while conflicting with federal rules. The income verification for 3 percent of our students is infinitely more efficient than identifying all students seeking at-risk services and requiring verification for each family. This bill would directly negatively impact thousands of students in our district alone.

If I can provide any additional information or answer questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Schumacher".

Dr. Michael Schumacher
Superintendent