

USD 258 Humboldt  
801 New York Street, Humboldt KS



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Senate Committee on Government Efficiency  
Written Testimony in Opposition to the Bill  
January 23, 2026

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to this bill. I am a Kansas resident and Superintendent of Schools for Humboldt USD 258. I am concerned that this proposal would create new barriers to free school meals and make it harder for schools to keep kids fed. Multiple experts and much research demonstrate the need to meet the most basic needs of students prior to expecting learning to occur. School meals help students show up ready to learn, support working families, and reduce hunger in our communities.

Several years ago, our board made the decision to move forward with community eligibility for the very reasons above. Our community has strongly supported that move since the beginning. The decision for community eligibility currently sits with local school boards and should remain there. They best know the needs and focus of their community. It's why they are elected locally.

We currently have an amazing food service director who has worked hard to offer nutritious meals that our students like and a variety of options for students. She spends her time working in our kitchens and meeting the needs of students. In fact, when we had several high school students not eating at lunch, she sat down with them to ask why. She found out that they really just wanted a salad for lunch. So, she worked with the rules around lunch components to find a way to make that happen. She allowed our secondary students to choose a salad as a meal option. That only happens if she's in our cafeterias working with students. If additional income verification is required, she will spend her time in an office instead of in cafeterias, working to ensure our students have access to healthy, nutritious options for breakfast and lunch.

My ask is that your committee will focus on protecting access for our youngest citizens to the meals that they need to learn and grow. Expect our local school boards to continue with their charge of maintaining the day-to-day operations of schools, of which meal service is a vital component. I respectfully urge you to oppose this bill and protect school meals for Kansas students. Thank you for your time and consideration. As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions. We would love to treat you to a meal in our cafeteria!

Sincerely,

Dr. Amber Wheeler,  
Superintendent USD 258 Humboldt