



SHAWNEE MISSION

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Senate Committee on Government Efficiency
Senate Bill Topic: Verification of household gross earned income for each student
in free meals program.
Opponent Written
January 27, 2026

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee:

Shawnee Misison School District is opposed to the proposed free meals verification policy change. Similar to most public school districts, the cost and administrative burden of annual verification beyond the federal requirements would be significant.

This 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.

The practical impact of this bill for just our district is significant:

- In a normal year, we verify around **120 students, which takes about a month to complete.**
- With this bill **2,280 free lunch students** would have to provide written proof of income.

The administrative burden would be significant, requiring funding and personnel adjustments to administer, again, beyond the federal legal requirements.

The impact on students is the more significant issue. Families of students who are eligible but have issues completing the required paperwork, face a financial burden paying for meals out-of-pocket expenses. If families had to start paying \$2.85/\$3.00 a meal, many might choose not to participate, which would reduce student access to meals or cause more to not pay their meal debt. The loss of breakfast meals further impacts the learning process and hinders students' ability to succeed in the classroom.

In short, this bill would be an additional administrative burden, as well as an unnecessary burden for more families to submit written documentations, and likely reduce participation, all while conflicting with federal rules. 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,



SHAWNEE MISSION
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. Michael Schumacher
Superintendent