

Testimony before the **Senate Committee for Government Efficiency**

In Opposition to ~~26rs2581~~ **SB 387 (School Meals)**

By **Jessica Younker, Director of Food Service** and **Chris Hipp, Assistant Superintendent**

1/23/2026

Madam Chair Senator Erickson

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this committee. We stand Opposed to 26rs2581 (School Meals). While we appreciate the great responsibility of this committee, we do not believe that this proposed change to free lunch verification improves efficiency. The proposed changes, as we understand them, would increase administrative burden and require increased administrative staff to meet verification requirements. These requirements would likely not result in a significant change to family eligibility for free lunches, thereby reducing overall efficiency of the food service program and diverting money away from the cafeteria to administrative tasks.

The current verification procedures are outlined by the federal food service and are a statistical sample of applications. The verification process does result in reclassification of some applications each year. Currently USD 489 averages approximately 175 free lunch applications over the past 3 years. On average, the randomly selected sample chosen for verification yields minimal changes. The use of statistical samples is the most efficient way to test and predict results for a full group. While increasing sampling size can increase the accuracy of predictions, a move to verifying every application would, by definition, decrease efficiency and would not likely change the number of reclassifications significantly.

This proposed change would also decrease funding efficiency. If USD 489 were required to verify every application, we project that would require the addition of between .75 and 1.0 FTE. This would increase the administrative cost by up to \$40,000. This increase in administrative costs would likely outweigh any reductions from verifications within our district. When extrapolated across the state, the result would likely be a significant reduction in the percentage of food service funds reaching the student tray.

On behalf of USD 489, I urge the committee to evaluate the current Federal requirements and consult with Food Service Directors across Kansas to determine areas to increase efficiency by improving our ability to feed every Kansas student every day.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. I will stand for any questions.

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