

HB 1574-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

19Feb2026... 0632h
05/14/2026 1607s

2026 SESSION

26-2877
12/08

HOUSE BILL **1574-FN**

AN ACT relative to the extension of the free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs and supporting administrative costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and making appropriations therefor.

SPONSORS: Rep. Weinstein, Rock. 10; Rep. Cornell, Hills. 22; Rep. Selig, Straf. 10; Rep. Sorensen, Rock. 28

COMMITTEE: Education Funding

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Authorizes school boards to extend free and reduced meal program eligibility for students with an individualized education program (IEP) that are already age 21 but attending school until the age of 22.

II. Directs the state to reimburse school boards from the general fund for free and reduced price meals for such eligible students.

III. Makes an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the purpose of supporting administrative cost impacts resulting from federal legislative cost-share changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in **bold italics**.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~in brackets and struck through.~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to the extension of the free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs and supporting administrative costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and making appropriations therefor.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Statement of Findings. The general court finds that:

2 I. The state of New Hampshire recognizes the importance of supporting the health and
3 nutritional needs of special education students with disabilities who, under recent changes by the
4 department of education, may continue their education beyond the age of 21.

5 II. The current system does not provide access to free and reduced lunch benefits at age 21,
6 creating barriers to access and potentially compromising the well-being of these students.

7 2 New Paragraph; Free and Reduced Meals Expanded for Students Over 21. Amend RSA
8 189:11-a by inserting after paragraph I the following new paragraph:

9 I-a.(a) Any student who is 21 years of age, enrolled in their resident school district or a
10 chartered public school, and who qualified for the National School Lunch Program or the National
11 School Breakfast Program at age 20 shall remain eligible to receive breakfasts and lunches at rates
12 consistent with applicable federal standards until the earliest of the following occurs:

13 (1) The student reaches 22 years of age;

14 (2) The student graduates from school;

15 (3) The student withdraws from school; or

16 (4) The student otherwise completes the student's educational program.

17 (b) All public school districts and chartered public schools that participate in the
18 National School Lunch Program or the National School Breakfast Program shall be eligible for
19 reimbursement for breakfasts and lunches served to qualifying students at the reimbursement rates
20 established under each applicable federal program by the department of education consistent with
21 this section.

22 (c) For any meal served to a qualifying student under this paragraph, reimbursement
23 shall first be sought under the applicable federal National School Lunch Program or National School
24 Breakfast Program to the maximum extent permitted by federal law. State reimbursement shall be
25 available only for meals that are not eligible for federal reimbursement. Nothing in this paragraph
26 shall be construed to permit duplicate reimbursement for the same meal.

27 (d) The department of education shall include, in its biennial budget and in each
28 subsequent budget submission, a specific request for funding sufficient to carry out the provisions of

1 this section. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant from the education trust fund to satisfy
2 the state's obligation under this paragraph.

3 (e) The state board of education may adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A relative to the
4 administration of extended breakfast and lunch aid under this paragraph.

5 3 Appropriation; Department of Education. There is hereby appropriated the sum of \$80,000 for
6 fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 to the department of education for the purpose of implementing and
7 administering the extended school meal eligibility and reimbursement program established under
8 this act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant from the education trust fund to satisfy the
9 state's obligation under this act the amount not otherwise appropriated.

10 4 Applicability. RSA 189:11-a as inserted in section 2 of this act shall apply to all eligible
11 students enrolled beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

12 5 Appropriation; Department of Health and Human Services.

13 I. The general court recognizes the importance of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
14 Program (SNAP) and its vital role in the state to reduce food insecurity. On July 4, 2025, Pub. L.
15 119-21 was signed into law, which changed the federal cost share contribution for administrative
16 costs to support state operations from 50 percent to 25 percent. New Hampshire's operating budget
17 for the biennium ending June 30, 2027 is projected to experience a \$4,400,000 general fund impact
18 as a result of the change in policy at the federal level. Due to the timing of the federal legislation,
19 the legislature did not have an opportunity to address budgetary impacts.

20 II. There is hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services the sum of
21 \$4,400,000 for the state fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 for the purpose of supporting the
22 administrative cost impacts resulting from federal legislative cost-share changes to the
23 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The governor is authorized to draw a warrant
24 for said sum out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

25 6 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

HB 1574-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE (AMENDMENT #2026-1607s)

AN ACT relative to the extension of the free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs and supporting administrative costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and making appropriations therefor.

FISCAL IMPACT:

| Estimated State Impact | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
| Revenue | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| <i>Revenue Fund(s)</i> | None | | | |
| Expenditures* | \$0 | \$4.4 million (DHHS) Up to \$145,000 Per Year (DOE) | Up to \$145,000 Per Year (DOE) | Up to \$145,000 Per Year (DOE) |
| <i>Funding Source(s)</i> | Education Trust Fund | | | |
| Appropriations* | \$0 | <u>Education Trust Fund</u> Statutory Open Warrant for Reimbursements <u>General Fund</u> \$4.4 million in FY 2027 for DHHS SNAP administrative costs; \$80,000 in FY 2027 for DOE Implementation/Admin Costs (Department Identified No Applicable Costs) | | |
| <i>Funding Source(s)</i> | General Fund and Education Trust Fund | | | |

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

| Estimated Political Subdivision Impact | | | | |
|--|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------|
| | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
| Local Revenue | \$0 | Up to \$145,000 Per Year | | |
| Local Expenditures | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

METHODOLOGY:

Sections 1-4 of this bill, effective July 1, 2026 (for the 2026-2027 school year), expands eligibility for free or reduced-price school breakfasts and lunches to students who are age 21 if they were eligible for the federal meal programs at age 20. These students remain eligible until they turn 22, graduate, withdraw, or complete their educational program. School districts and chartered

public schools may receive federal reimbursement first, with state reimbursement available only for meals not eligible for federal funding. The Department of Education has provided assumptions and an estimate as to this bill's potential fiscal impact:

Assumptions

- Typically, students in this age range are all on an individualized education program (IEP).
- Currently there are 117 students age 21 and 1 student that is age 22.
 - It is unknown if the above students qualify for free or reduced priced meals.
 - Calculations will be made utilizing the current federal reimbursement for free meals.
- Each student eats both breakfast and lunch each school day.
- The number of school days is 180.
- The State will use the Federal Reimbursed Rates to reimburse local school districts for meals.
- Current federal reimbursement rates (School Year 25-26)
 - Breakfast:
 - \$2.49 free
 - \$2.16 reduced
 - Lunch
 - \$4.69 free
 - \$4.29 reduced
- The state currently pays reimbursement for each breakfast meal served under the federal program at a rate of \$0.03 per each free and paid meal and \$0.30 per reduced priced meal.
- There is no state reimbursement for lunch.
- The department confirmed with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) that according to federal regulation 7 CFR 210.2 (child) students above the age of 21 are not eligible for reimbursable meals and there is an age limitation on USDA definition of a child section.

Fiscal Impact

To provide reimbursement for free or reduced priced meals served to students aged 21 to 22 would cost approximately \$144,645 (maximum) per year utilizing the current data.

- Breakfast would cost a maximum of \$53,525 per year
 - Total students = 118
 - Federal Free Breakfast Reimbursement = \$2.49

- State Breakfast Reimbursement = \$.03
- 180 school days
- Total estimated cost of breakfast reimbursement
 - $(118 * [\$2.49 + \$0.03]) * 180 = \$53,525$
- Lunch would cost a maximum of \$91,120 per year
 - Total students = 118
 - Federal Free Lunch Reimbursement = \$4.29
 - 180 school days
 - Total estimated cost of lunch reimbursement
 - $(118 * \$4.29 * 180 = \$91,120$

This bill provides a statutory open warrant from the education trust fund to satisfy the state's reimbursement under this bill.

In addition, the bill makes a general fund appropriation of \$80,000 in FY 2027 to implement and administer the program. The Department has not identified any costs associated with administering this bill.

Section 5 of the bill appropriates \$4.4 million to the Department of Health and Human Services in FY 2027 for the purpose of funding the increasing state share of administrative costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Currently, the state share of administrative costs is 50 percent, while the remaining 50 percent is funded with federal dollars. Under federal law (specifically, Public Law 119-21, also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act"), the state share will increase to 75 percent effective October 1, 2026. SNAP benefits themselves (as distinct from administrative costs) are and will remain fully federally funded.

In previous correspondence with the Office of the Legislative Budget Assistant (LBA), the Department noted that in federal fiscal year 2024, federal SNAP benefits distributed to NH residents totaled \$154.3 million, while in state fiscal year 2025, SNAP administrative costs totaled \$24.4 million. SNAP administrative costs therefore equated to approximately 15.8 percent of benefit costs over these overlapping periods. The Department noted that administrative costs "...are comprehensive and represent direct salaries, allocated costs to supervisors, travel, telecom, contracts, IT costs/systems, facilities, and other related costs."

As noted above, the state share of administrative costs will soon increase from 50 percent to 75 percent. On an annual basis, then, the state's share of the \$24.4 million cost will rise from \$12.2 million to \$18.3 million, an increase of \$6.1 million. Since the increase will not take effect until

October 1, 2026, the state's share will increase by approximately \$4.6 million for the remaining nine months of the FY26/27 biennium. It is the LBA's understanding that the \$4.4 million appropriation contained in the amendment reflects the amount requested by the Department of Health and Human Services.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Education