

Rx for PA – School Food Services *School Nutrition Incentive Program*

Legislative Request

Appropriate \$6 million to the PA Department of Education to maintain the level of funding allocated last year for the Rx for PA – School Food Services Program.

Program Summary

Through legislation enacted in July 2007, the School Nutrition Incentive Program provides a supplemental state reimbursement for school meals to those schools that implement the PA Department of Education’s nutritional standards for food and beverage products available on the school campuses. The additional reimbursement applies to every breakfast and lunch served through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) for that school building. The nutritional standards pertain to food and beverage products that are available outside of the meals served by the NSLP and SBP, such items sold a la carte, through vending machines, or in school stores. If the school building (the policy does not have to apply district-wide) decides to adopt and implement the guidelines for those items, then that building will receive the higher reimbursement rate for its NSLP and SBP meals. **See the chart below for the increased reimbursement rates for the 2007-08 school year.**

To view the *Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods in Pennsylvania Schools* visit www.pde.state.pa.us/food_nutrition and click on the “School Nutrition Incentive Program” link.

Legislative Rational

Due to rising obesity rates and increased health problems plaguing children throughout our state, a dietitian at the PA Department of Education developed these nutritional standards to assist districts in how to assure more healthful choices for students in school settings. With children spending more than half of their waking hours in school (and consuming a large amount of their daily caloric intake at school during the school year), our Commonwealth is realizing the importance of making sure the school environment promotes good nutrition and an active lifestyle. Currently, NSLP and SBP meals must meet strict guidelines set by USDA in order to receive federal subsidies however regulations for items sold or made available outside of these programs have not been amended since the 1970s. Given the nutritional advancements made since that time, these regulations should be changed so as not to contradict current nutrition education programs in schools, to undermine dietary regulations of the NSLP or SBP, or to provide students with minimally nutritional food and beverages as an acceptable option for school meals.

2007-08 State Reimbursement Rates When <i>Not</i> Implementing the School Nutrition Incentive Program		2007-08 State Reimbursement Rates When Implementing the School Nutrition Incentive Program	
Breakfasts Served	10 cents	Breakfasts Served	11 cents
Lunches Served	10 cents	Lunches Served	11 cents
(School does not participate in the School Breakfast Program)		(School does not participate in the School Breakfast Program)	
Lunches Served	12 cents	Lunches Served	14 cents
(School serves breakfast to less than or equal to 20% of enrolled students)		(School serves breakfast to less than or equal to 20% of enrolled students)	
Lunches Served	14 cents	Lunches Served	17 cents
(School serves breakfast to greater than 20% of enrolled students)		(School serves breakfast to greater than 20% of enrolled students)	