

HOUSE BILL NO. 479
INTRODUCED BY H. RASER

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS; RAISING PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS THROUGH MEAL PROGRAM STARTUPS AND UPGRADED EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION THAT GENERATES FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, the goal of the Office of Public Instruction's School Nutrition Programs is to ensure that schools provide nutritious meals and promote healthy lifestyles through collaborative education and training and administration of United States Department of Agriculture funds; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the important link between nutrition, health, and academic achievement, as affirmed in Senate Joint Resolution No. 2 passed by the 2003 Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature needs to address the needs of schools in high poverty areas and of schools with low participation in nutrition programs because of minimal funding of breakfast and lunch programs and the deterioration of the equipment and facilities required to make nutritious and readily accessible meals.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. State appropriation to improve access to healthy school meals -- appropriation -- competitive application. (1) There is an appropriation of \$250,000 to improve Montana student access to healthy school meals during the period from July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2009. The appropriation is made to the superintendent of public instruction to make grants to school districts that have been found eligible through a competitive application process.

(2) Fifty Montana school districts must be awarded grants for access to healthy school meals. The superintendent of public instruction shall create a process for the request for proposals under which all Montana school districts may apply for these grants. The superintendent shall ensure that the competitive application process identifies the 50 school districts most suitable for the award of healthy school meals grants based upon need, capacity, and other criteria that the superintendent may find appropriate.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Federal reimbursement. (1) The implementation of [section 1] and

associated equipment and facility upgrades will lead to increased student access to and participation in the office of public instruction's school nutrition programs. This, in turn, increases federal reimbursement in accordance with Public Law 108-265.

(2) The superintendent of public instruction is authorized to receive the reimbursements described in subsection (1) in the manner provided for in this part.

NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2007.

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