

# Bill: Crosby/Johnson Act: Free Lunch for All NC Public School Students

By Constance Lav Johnson & Victor Crosby, Submitted to Governor Roy Cooper, Senator Dan Blue & Rep. Zack Hawkins

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## **This Bill Declares that All Children must Receive Access to Food Regardless of Income to Ensure Equal Educational Rights**

Immediately without hesitation, school meals are delivered to each student by the State of North Carolina, which ensures equal educational rights under the law.



Under the Written Policies of the NC State Board of Education, under the category, “GOALS”, the state is required to ensure “Every Student is Healthy, Safe, and Responsible”.

### **NC State Board of Education’s Goals:**

**Goal:** Every student in the NC Public School System graduates from high school prepared for work, further education, and citizenship

**Goal:** Every student has a personalized education

**Goal:** Every student, every day has excellent educators

**Goal:** Every school district has up-to-date financial, business, and technology systems to serve its students, parents and educators

**Goal:** Every student is healthy, safe, and responsible

**Goal:** Ensure equity of educational opportunity for all students

# According to the US Department of Agriculture

## School Food Laws

**School food** policies help **schools** provide children with **foods** and drinks that are part of a healthy diet. ... The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires the meals served by these programs to be healthy and nutritious.

## Constance Lav Johnson and Victor Crosby's Statement related to the USDA's Requirement to Provide Free Lunch for All NC Public School Students:

This requirement cannot be met if foods consumed by students during meal times are not equal and are provided by various unknown sources. The present system of feeding children is unequal, unhealthy, unsafe, and unproductive for educational achievement.

## Evidence

- 1) North Carolina There is a State Board of Education Policy that requires all public schools (not including Charter Schools) to participate in the NSLP, but there is no mandate for breakfast. The state provides no additional funds for lunch, but it ... (See the link below)  
[https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/Legislation\\_and\\_Policy/State\\_and\\_Local\\_Legislation\\_and\\_Regulations/3-2013-14StateSchoolMealMandatesandReimbursements.pdf](https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/Legislation_and_Policy/State_and_Local_Legislation_and_Regulations/3-2013-14StateSchoolMealMandatesandReimbursements.pdf)
- 2) "Eating a healthy diet helps children stay alert during class, fight off illnesses, and grow into strong, healthy adults. School children get up to half the food they need each day at school, which makes schools an important place for learning healthy eating habits. School food policies help schools provide children with foods and drinks that are part of a healthy diet."  
<https://publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/healthy-eating/food-schools>
- 3) North Carolina is a top farm state and cannot feed their citizens, and leaves children without meals.  
[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/North\\_Carolina/Publications/Farm\\_Reports/FarmReport03.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/North_Carolina/Publications/Farm_Reports/FarmReport03.pdf)  
  
NC Department of Agriculture's Farm Reports  
[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/North\\_Carolina/Publications/Farm\\_Reports/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/North_Carolina/Publications/Farm_Reports/index.php)
- 4) Funding: The USDA provides numerous opportunities for funding through grants.  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/content/usda-announces-4-million-grants-available-support-maple-syrup-industry>

- 5) Food provided FREE based on income is the most humiliating experience for students. It impacts their abilities to focus on school work, enjoyment of education, psychological prowess, and equality with peers. The free school lunch programs must be applied to all children in the public and charter schools to ensure scholastic and health equality. All else is unconstitutional.  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>
- 6) A Model, Not Solely for Education, but for Educational Equality for Each Child/Student. [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/f2s/USDA\\_GranteeReport\\_O.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/f2s/USDA_GranteeReport_O.pdf)
- 7) Hunger and Health – The Role of the Federal Child Nutrition Programs in Improving Health and Well-Being. This paper summarizes the harmful impacts of poverty, food insecurity, and poor nutrition on the health and well-being of children; and summarizes research demonstrating the effective role of the Child Nutrition Programs in improving food and economic security, dietary intake, weight outcomes, health, and learning. <http://frac.org/research/resource-library/hunger-health-role-federal-child-nutrition-programs-improving-health-well>

## Bill Summary

North Carolina, being one of the most successful farm states in the nation, is one of the least likely to provide nutritious healthy farm fresh foods to our school children and youth, contradicting the state's own educational goals. Our farmers are eager to take on this responsibility and our hospital systems know the value of feeding our citizens healthy meals for their overall health in later years. The hospital systems have agreed to support the effort of providing all school age students free lunch, in addition to free breakfast, with the hopes of including options for free afternoon snacks before heading home after 3:00 p.m. to homes without meals.

Equality is what we strive for in our educational system. Without this pledge and law ensuring the meals for our students, equality is lost. Let North Carolina be the beacon of justice for the United States and other nations. We are leading in the farming industries, producing the most viable healthy crops. Let us also be the leaders, providing schools with healthy farm fresh foods, serving the most important meals of the day to all our students. I'm ready to measure the achievement gap annually to determine the impact of providing our students healthy meals.#