

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 425

(Senator Hettleman, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Ways and Means

Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program - Alterations
(Maryland Meals for Achievement Flexibility Act of 2024)

This bill authorizes elementary schools participating in the Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA) program to serve breakfast in any broadly accessible part of the school, including from “Grab and Go” carts after the arrival of students to the school, provided that students are allowed to consume the meal in the classroom after the start of the school day. To do so, an elementary school must have approval from the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) and from its local board of education. The bill also clarifies that secondary schools that serve breakfast, including from “Grab and Go” carts after the arrival of students to the school, must serve these breakfasts in any *broadly accessible* part of the school. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change is procedural in nature and does not directly affect governmental finance.

Local Effect: To the extent that local boards and nonpublic schools participating in MMFA take advantage of the flexibility offered under the bill, the number of breakfasts served (and federal and State funding) may be altered on a school-by-school basis, but the bill does not substantially alter statewide local participation, which is constrained by the annual State appropriation.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: MMFA is a joint effort of MSDE and local boards of education or sponsoring agencies for eligible nonpublic schools. MMFA provides funding for schools that make an in-class breakfast available to all students enrolled in schools in which 40% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced-price meals (FRPMs). A school that for one year falls below the 40% FRPM student population eligibility threshold is eligible for MMFA funding in that year. However, the school is no longer eligible for MMFA funding if its percentage of students falls below 40% in a second consecutive year.

Schools are selected to participate in the program and must serve breakfasts that meet MSDE guidelines and federal nutritional standards for schools that participate in the federal school breakfast program. Participating schools must serve breakfasts in the classroom after arrival of students to the school. However, secondary schools (middle schools and high schools) that participate in MMFA may serve breakfast in any part of the school, including from “Grab and Go” carts, after arrival of students to the school. Under Chapter 628 of 2023, the Governor must include in the annual budget bill \$12.05 million for MMFA. Accordingly, the fiscal 2025 allowance includes \$12.05 million for MMFA.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 386 (Delegate Feldmark) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; St. Mary’s County Public Schools; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 29, 2024
rh/mcr Third Reader - March 18, 2024

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