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S.F. No. 777 – School Meals Policies

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Section 1. School Meals Policies; Lunch Aid; Food Service Accounting.

Subdivision 1. School meals policies. (a) Requires a participant in the national school lunch program to adopt and post a school meals policy.

(b) Requires the policy to be in writing, reasonable, well-defined, and clearly communicate student meal charges when payment cannot be collected. Requires the policy to maintain the dignity of students by prohibiting lunch shaming.

(c) Requires the policy to address whether a collections agency is used by the participant to collect unpaid school meals debt.

(d) Requires the policy to ensure that once a meal is placed on a tray or otherwise served to a student that the meal is not withdrawn from the student.

(e) Requires the policy to ensure that a student who is eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch is always served a reimbursable meal even if they have outstanding debt.

(f) Requires a school to provide a vendor, if applicable, with its school meals policy and require the vendor to adhere to the policy for contracts entered or modified after July 1, 2021.

Subd. 4. No fees. Prohibits a participant that receives school lunch aid from denying a school lunch to a student who qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch whether the student has outstanding school meal debt attributable to a la carte purchases or for any other reason.

Subd. 5. Respectful treatment. (a) Requires the participant to provide meals to students in a respectful manner. Provides examples of prohibited activities, which include dumping meals, withdrawing a meal that has been served, announcing or listing students' names publicly, or

affixing stickers, stamps, or pins. Prohibits a participant from imposing restrictions under section 123B.37 (Prohibited Fees) due to unpaid student meal balance.

(b) Directs the commissioner to send a letter of noncompliance to the participant if the commissioner determines that they have violated the requirement to provide meals in a respectful manner.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective July 1, 2021.