

Submitter: Jill Salamunovich  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1581

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Jill Salamunovich, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 1581: School Meals for All.

SB 1581 ensures that every student can access breakfast and lunch at school at no cost, regardless of income. This is a critical step to addressing hunger during an affordability crisis and ensuring that students can focus on learning rather than worrying about food.

I am especially encouraged that SB 1581 makes breakfast accessible after the start of the school day, recognizing that many students arrive late due to transportation barriers or family work schedules. Allowing breakfast to be served in the classroom and counted as instructional time ensures students are nourished without losing valuable learning time.

The bill also reduces administrative burdens for schools by eliminating meal applications, income verification, and unpaid meal debt collection. Just as importantly, it protects students from stigma and meal shaming, helping create school environments rooted in dignity, equity, and inclusion.

Food is a human right and no child should go hungry in a nation as rich as the United States. Yet with the cost of living rising significantly, families across the state are having to make tough decisions about how to spend limited resources and this is an opportunity to help fill those gaps by ensuring every child is fed and ready to learn. When my children attended Grout Elementary, free school meals were an essential lifeline for so many families...and that need has only increased exponentially with the current administration's relentless attacks on food benefits and assistance.

Research and lived experience consistently show that when students have reliable access to nutritious food, schools see improved attendance, fewer disciplinary incidents, and stronger academic outcomes. SB 1581 is a smart investment in Oregon's students and our future.

With only a small number of schools remaining before Oregon becomes a Hunger-Free Schools state, I urge you to vote YES on SB 1581 and ensure that no child in Oregon goes hungry at school.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

Respectfully,  
Jill Salamunovich  
Portland, Oregon  
Parent & concerned community member