

STATE OF NEW YORK

1087

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 8, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. JACKSON, WEPRIN, SHIMSKY, HYNDMAN -- read once
and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to enacting the "making
equitable and alternative lunches (MEAL) act"

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "making equitable and alternative lunches (MEAL) act".

3 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 915-a to
4 read as follows:

5 § 915-a. Alternative school meal and snack options. 1. As used in this
6 section:

7 (a) "Plant-based food option" means food or beverages that are free of
8 animal products and, as relates to the "protein" portion of a meal,
9 recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture as a meat
10 alternate for purposes of the national school lunch program.

11 (b) "Animal product" means meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, eggs, honey,
12 and any derivative thereof.

13 2. Every public school shall offer a plant-based food option, a halal
14 food option and a kosher food option as an alternative to every meal or
15 snack offered in food service to any student who chooses such alterna-
16 tive meal or snack as an option pursuant to subdivision three of this
17 section.

18 3. A student or person in parental relation to the student shall have
19 the option to select an alternative meal or snack option at the begin-
20 ning of the school year and two additional times during the school year
21 as determined by such public school district.

22 4. The alternative food options described in this section shall be
23 offered at no additional cost to the student beyond what would be
24 charged for a comparable non-alternative food option.

25 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to public
26 school food service beginning with the school year, as defined in the
27 education law, beginning one year after it shall have become a law.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD02352-01-5