



Proposition FF: Healthy meals for all

Student Voter Information Guide

Proposition FF Healthy School Meals for All proposes to amend the Colorado statute to create healthy school meals for all children enrolled in public schools in the state of Colorado regardless of household income. Schools participating in the program would be included starting in the school year of 2024-2025. This proposal also includes increasing taxes paid by households earning \$300,000 or more annually to fund the program.

Currently, school meals are paid for with state and federal funding through grants and programs as well as direct payments from families to pay for their students' school meals. Colorado currently has a reduced lunch program that pays for student meals by offering free meals to students based on the student's total family income.

A yes vote on proposition FF will result in money being set aside to provide every public-school student in Colorado with free meals at school regardless of family income. This fund will be supported by limiting the number of tax deductions households making over \$300,000 a year can make.

A no vote will result in no change of policy. This means that the current system of providing free lunches for low-income households will remain and no changes will occur to the state tax law. Currently the state receives funding from the federal government as well as state support for low-income meal payments. Students that do not meet the requirements or the low income threshold must purchase their own lunches. Arguments for the proposal include the stigma that goes along with the free lunch program as kids on the free and reduced lunch program often feel embarrassed or ashamed and do not utilize the program to its full potential. Arguments against the proposition do not believe it is the responsibility of the state or the government to feed these children. They argue that the parents should be responsible for providing adequate meals regardless of income.

Overall, this initiative's purpose is to decrease food insecurity felt by Coloradans under the current Free Meal program. This proposition will increase taxes on households that make more than \$300,000 a year by \$450 dollars and increase state participation in federal grants already in place to help school students receive lunch

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Sources:

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