

January 24, 2023

Minnesota Senate Education Finance Committee  
3209 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Kunesh and Committee Members,

General Mills supports SF 123 which provides no cost breakfast and lunch to all Minnesota students, and encourages its passage this session.

We have been involved in community efforts to address hunger and food insecurity in Minnesota and across the U.S. for decades. Through this work we have seen the clear importance of ensuring that every child starts and gets through their school day well-nourished and ready to learn. School meal programs that enable every child to access nutritious meals each school day are a proven way to strengthen food security among school-aged children.

Our [companywide commitment to advancing racial equity](#) compels us to act and lend our voice especially to the farmers, communities and consumers we serve, many of whom also participate in and support school nutrition programs. We believe that children and families should have equitable access to the food and nutrition that they need and prefer, and that one's place, race and income should not be a predictor of one's life outcomes nor impact one's ability to be food secure. Passage of Hunger-Free schools has the potential to dramatically reduce structural and institutional inequities and destigmatize the utilization of school meals for all Minnesota students. As a founding member of the Minnesota Business Coalition for Racial Equity, General Mills strongly supports this proposal from the perspective of advancing racial equity.

Most of Minnesota's workforce is homegrown. As such, today's students will comprise the majority of Minnesota's future workforce and a sizeable portion of our company's workforce as well. As young learners, they need consistent access to nutritious food to thrive in school. Current programs such as free and reduced price lunch address some of the need. But today, 1 in 4 food-insecure kids in Minnesota comes from a household with an income that disqualifies them from free or reduced-cost school meals. A broader approach also reduces the paperwork burden on parents and school districts.

We urge your support for SF 123 so we can continue to ensure all children receive the nourishment they need to be successful in school.

Sincerely,



Lee Anderson