

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 396

FINAL READING

Introduced by Brandt, 32; Briese, 41; Cavanaugh, J., 9; DeBoer, 10; Dorn, 30; Geist, 25; Gragert, 40; McCollister, 20; McKinney, 11; Murman, 38; Sanders, 45; Williams, 36; Wishart, 27; Hunt, 8; Brewer, 43; Day, 49; Blood, 3.

Read first time January 14, 2021

Committee: Education

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; and to adopt the Nebraska Farm-to-
- 2 School Program Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 7 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Nebraska Farm-to-School Program Act.

3 Sec. 2. For purposes of this act:

4 (1) Food means an agricultural commodity or product, whether raw or
5 processed, that is produced and marketed for human consumption; and

6 (2) Program means the Nebraska farm-to-school program as established
7 in section 3 of this act.

8 Sec. 3. A Nebraska farm-to-school program is established to be
9 administered on a statewide basis by the State Department of Education.

10 Sec. 4. (1) The program shall provide for the purchase of locally
11 and regionally produced or processed food in order to improve child
12 nutrition and strengthen local and regional farm economies.

13 (2) The program shall link elementary and secondary public and
14 nonpublic schools in this state with Nebraska farms in a manner that
15 provides schools with fresh and minimally processed food for inclusion in
16 school meals and snacks, encourages children to develop healthy eating
17 habits, and improves the incomes of Nebraska farmers who will enjoy
18 direct access to consumer markets.

19 (3) The program may include activities that provide students with
20 hands-on learning opportunities, including, but not limited to, farm
21 visits, cooking demonstrations, and school gardening and composting
22 programs, and that integrate nutrition and agricultural education into
23 the school curricula.

24 Sec. 5. The State Department of Education shall employ a
25 coordinator to administer the program. The duties of such coordinator
26 shall include:

27 (1) Identifying and promoting the critical ways for local
28 communities to participate in the program and advise communities on
29 needed strategies, plans, and action to administer the program;

30 (2) Establishing a partnership with public agencies and nonprofit
31 organizations to implement a public engagement campaign and establish a

1 structure to facilitate communication between farmers and schools;

2 (3) Providing leadership at the state level to encourage schools to
3 develop and improve school nutrition plans using locally or regionally
4 grown or locally or regionally processed food;

5 (4) Conducting workshops and training sessions and providing
6 technical assistance to school food services, farmers, processors, and
7 distributors regarding the demand for and the availability of Nebraska
8 food products, and assisting persons seeking to participate in the
9 program;

10 (5) Providing information regarding the program in an electronic
11 format on the web sites for the State Department of Education and the
12 Department of Agriculture; and

13 (6) Seeking financial or in-kind contributions to support the
14 program.

15 Sec. 6. The Department of Agriculture and the State Department of
16 Education shall cooperate in administering the program and shall each
17 provide professional consultation and staff support.

18 Sec. 7. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate one
19 hundred thousand dollars from the General Fund to the State Department of
20 Education each fiscal year. Such funds shall be used for purposes of
21 supporting the program, including, but not limited to, salaries, support,
22 maintenance, and miscellaneous purposes.