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REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 86
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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STANDING COMMITTEES
Higher Education
Public & Community Health
Technology & Infrastructure Innovation

Thursday, October 30, 2025

Dear DeKalb County School Board,

I am urging you to temporarily halt the use of alternative lunches and ensure that every student receives a full, nutritious meal, regardless of their lunch balance until the federal SNAP freeze is lifted.

Families across DeKalb County are navigating real financial strain right now, and many parents are waiting on critical benefits to resume. No child should be punished or stigmatized with an alternative meal simply because of a temporary balance issue.

Access to a full, healthy lunch directly impacts learning, focus, and emotional well-being. During this period of financial uncertainty, we must lead with compassion and stand firm in our belief that no child should go hungry at school.

I'm calling on the Board to:

- Pause the "alternative lunch" policy until after the SNAP freeze ends.
- Provide all students a full lunch, regardless of account balance.
- Work with community partners to help cover lunch debt once benefits resume.

Our students deserve nourishment, dignity, and support during this time and as we head into the holidays. Let's do what's right for DeKalb's children.

Sincerely,

Representative Imani Barnes, MSPH, RLAT
Doctoral Candidate, Doctor of Public Health
Georgia State House of Representatives HD 86, DeKalb County

