



2023 Position Paper

New York State is rich with products that are produced statewide. Including these fresh, local products in both breakfast and lunch meals during the school day will benefit not only the students but also New York State's economy.

School breakfast, lunch, summer meals, and after-school meals have offered a lifeline for families struggling with economic uncertainty.

1 in 7 kids in New York experience hunger, disproportionately impacting Black and Latinx children. These programs, proven to fuel student success and combat child hunger and obesity, will be critical to our state's recovery.

School Nutrition Professionals mobilized immediately when the pandemic closed school doors statewide back in March of 2020. Despite the many challenges they were subjected to, such as staff shortages, supply chain issues and increased operating costs, they continued to ensure student access to **healthy school meals at no charge** for all students. This was made possible through the extension of federal waivers, but those waivers expired June 30, 2022. To support the health and achievement of New York's students and to ensure the financial sustainability of school meal programs, the 3,500+ members of the New York School Nutrition Association (NYSNA) call on New York's elected officials to:

Expand the 30% New York State Incentive Program to include all Meals.

- Expand student access to healthy local foods at more meals during the school day and increase school food purchases from New York producers.
- This will also reduce the administrative burden related to separating lunch purchases from other meal purchases.
- Improved ability to purchase New York produced food while increasing participating in school meals

Beginning in school year 2023-2024, provide healthy school meals at no charge for all students in New York State – regardless of income.

- Provide all students equal access to school breakfast and lunch and eliminate any stigma or barriers for students. Nutritious school meals are proven to support learning, improve attendance, classroom behavior and contribute to overall health and wellness.
- Ensure that no child goes hungry during the school day or accrues unpaid meal debt, a burden on both families and school district budgets.
- 726,000+ additional students statewide will have access to healthy school meals at no cost.