



WASHINGTON SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION (WSNA) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

2010-11

Revised 11/13/09

State participation in Federal Nutrition Programs that benefit Washington children and youth is based upon a collaborative funding partnership among federal, state and local entities. Proactive legislation, supporting a stable state funding base, ensures quality child nutrition programs that support health, development and education for all children.

I. Maintain Current Funding

WSNA appeals to the Washington State Legislature to continue its commitment to student achievement in school through access to healthy school lunches by maintaining the elimination of the K-12 reduced price breakfast copay and the K-3 reduced price lunch copay. Enacted in 2006 and 2007, respectively, this state funding has gone a long way to significantly reduce childhood hunger among a population challenged by the present economy.

WSNA continues to support a two-tier payment structure for Lunch: Free and Paid.

- Eliminate the reduced price co-payment for all students currently qualifying for reduced price lunches, providing access to lunch at no family cost to these students through the State's funding the lunch (\$.40) co-pay.
- Harmonize the school lunch guidelines with the WIC guidelines of 185% of poverty to qualify for assistance with no out-of-pocket cost (Free). Federal guidelines for participation in the WIC program allow for families at 185% of poverty to qualify for assistance with no out of pocket cost. However, families at 185% of poverty must pay an out of pocket meal co-pay for school lunches as they are in a reduced price category under federal guidelines. Families with children receiving benefits at no out of pocket cost before they enter school are suddenly faced with out of pocket costs for reduced price lunches when their children enter school. State funding of reduced price lunch co-pays supports the nutrition safety net for these vulnerable families that, in some cases are headed by grandparents on fixed incomes.
- Eliminating the co-pay when funds become available will provide the opportunity to access lunch to a significant number of upper elementary and middle school students. It is projected that schools would serve an additional 985,860 reduced price lunches, which will increase the Federal support to school districts by \$2,139,316 per biennium.
- Besides the additional federal support, State funding of the reduced price lunch co-pay also supports the local and state economy through jobs in the food service industry, jobs in business that support the food service industry and increased purchases of food and supplies from Washington businesses.