

Child Nutrition Reauthorization Survey Results and Summary

During the spring of 2008, California Food Policy Advocates conducted a survey of priorities and policy changes for the upcoming Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR). Over 500 people from California and the states of USDA's Western Region responded to this survey. Nearly all respondents supported the policy changes proposed in CFPA's CNR survey. However, a few proposals generated more enthusiasm than others. Conversely, a few proposals triggered some opposition.

The list below categorizes policy changes by those with the strongest support and by those few that garnered some opposition. We felt it was important to acknowledge the small number of items that generated opposition from a small number of respondents. In the coming weeks and months, CFPA will conduct follow-up to learn the source of opposition to particular policy proposals. While some opposition might be a result of differing ideology on the role of government or the purpose of the federal child nutrition programs, we also believe some opposition might simply be due to a misunderstanding of the proposed policy changes.

ITEMS WITH STRONGEST SUPPORT:

*Those listed in **bold** had particularly widespread support based on the number of respondents who indicated the strongest level of support to each item on our survey.*

School Meals

- Eliminate the reduced price category and align eligibility for free school meals with WIC, at 185% of FPL.
- Authorize USDA to limit the sale of competitive foods in schools.
- Provide schools with grants to improve eating areas.
- **Provide incentives for schools to prepare nutritious meals on site.**
- **Provide a higher reimbursement to schools which meet higher nutrition standards.**
- **Provide a higher reimbursement for school meals. (*Item above had even stronger support than this one*)**
- Require all low-performing or high-poverty schools to serve school breakfast.

- **Ensure that school meal patterns are updated to align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans within one year of the publication of these guidelines.**
- **Provide incentives for increasing fresh fruits and vegetables in school meals through Farm-to-School programs.**
- **Expand the fruit and vegetable snack pilot to all schools in all states.**
- Shift more of the calories in school meals from meat and protein sources to fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Create incentives for switching from juice to fresh, whole fruits and vegetables.**
- **Allow students to take extra helpings of fruits and vegetables during school meals.**

Meals Outside of School (Summer, After School, Child Care, etc.)

- Provide a higher reimbursement for the meals served in child care settings.
- Simplify the administration of CACFP.
- Ensure that meal patterns are updated to align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans within one year of the publication of these guidelines.
- **Provide incentives for increasing fresh fruits and vegetables in meals through Farm-to-Institution programs.**
- **Create incentives for switching from juice to fresh, whole fruits and vegetables.**
- **Allow kids to take extra helpings of fruits and vegetables during meals and snacks.**

WIC

- Support full funding for all potentially eligible WIC participants.
- Include more funding for the cash-value vouchers for fruits and vegetables.
- Include funding to implement WIC EBT in every state by 2012.
- Increase funding for WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.

ITEMS PRODUCING OPPOSITION

*At least five percent of respondents indicated they were actively against the priorities listed below. Those in **bold** had at least 10 percent of respondents in such a position. We are doing some follow-up to identify whether there is active opposition, whether these are simply not priorities, or misunderstood the policy intention.*

School Meals

- Eliminate individual paper applications for free meals by determining eligibility based on poverty data for the area or district.
- Authorize USDA to limit the sale of competitive foods in schools.
- Close high school campuses such that students cannot leave the school campus during the school day to purchase food, often unhealthy, off-campus.
- Require that all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program also participate in the School Breakfast Program.
- Create a separate commodity entitlement for school breakfast.
- **Ensure that some portion of school nutrition commodities be directed to promote certain, healthy foods rather than allow all purchasing decisions to remain local.**
- **Require that compliance to the dietary guidelines be based on what kids actually eat for each meal rather than what is written on the menu over the course of the week.**
- Require school districts to regularly survey parents and kids to allow for their feedback on meal quality and taste.
- Shift more of the calories in school meals from meat and protein sources to fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Meals Outside of School (Summer, After School, Child Care, etc.)

- Provide funds to serve a full supper, instead of just snacks, in afterschool programs.
- Reduce monitoring requirements in the Summer Food Service Program.
- Align child care foods with the WIC food package.
- Require that all child care facilities receiving federal funds to participate in CACFP.
- Increase CACFP afternoon snack for school aged children to three components and increase funding commensurately.