

Invest in School Meals for All: How it Works



ACTION

Make targeted State investments to enable the implementation of universally free breakfast & lunch in schools where there is a substantial need among students but federal rules make the provision of universally free meals unattainable or unsustainable for school districts & charter schools.

FUNDING FORMULAS

Existing federal policies determine the **federal contribution** to universally free school meals served via the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

- % of students in need * 1.6 multiplier = % of meals reimbursed at the higher rate
- All other meals are reimbursed at the lower rate

Examples of calculating the **state contribution** under the Invest in School Meals for All proposal:

If 40% of students in a school meet the federal definition of need...

Funding Goal 85% of meals reimbursed at higher rate + 15% of meals reimbursed at lower rate	-	Federal Contribution 64% of meals reimbursed at higher rate + 36% of meals reimbursed at lower rate	=	State Contribution
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If 45% of students in a school meet federal definition of need...

Funding Goal 85% of meals reimbursed at higher rate + 15% of meals reimbursed at lower rate	-	Federal Contribution 72% of meals reimbursed at the higher rate + 28% of meals reimbursed at the lower rate	=	State Contribution
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NOTES

Rates of reimbursement can vary by school demographics. A full description of reimbursement rates is available here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/rates1920.asp>. To give a general sense of the scale of federal reimbursement rates in school year 2019-20:

	Breakfast	Lunch
Higher Rate	\$2.20	\$3.50
Lower Rate	\$0.31	\$0.41

For the purposes of CEP, federal policy dictates that students who meet the definition of need (aka the "identified students") are students deemed eligible for free meals without the use of a school meal application (e.g. students who are directly certified via participation in certain public benefit programs and children who are categorically eligible due to their status as a foster, migrant, or homeless student).

Per federal policy, the nationwide multiplier can be adjusted to values from 1.3 to 1.6. The 1.6 value has stood since the first implementation of CEP (as a multi-state pilot in 2011-12 and nationwide in 2014-15). Schools electing to operate CEP are guaranteed the same multiplier for at least a four-year cycle.