







The School Lunch/School Breakfast Programs

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was created 60 years ago by Congress "as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children". It began after the government noted nutritional deficiencies in the men who responded to the draft and was enacted so that all children could have at least one healthful meal per day. The School Breakfast Program (SBP) began in 1966 as a pilot program in recognition of the relationship between food, good nutrition, and children's ability to develop and learn. The SBP reaches needy children; around 80% of children eating school breakfast are low income. It raises the nutrition level of children, providing 1/4 or more of a child's daily nutrient requirements.

Hungry children are more susceptible to illness, are more likely to experience anxiety or depression, and have more disciplinary problems in school, according to a Kleinman and Murphy study published in *Pediatrics* in 1998. Children who have nourishing meals have the best chance for learning and success in school. Each school day an average of 466,623 free and reduced price lunches, 563,679 full price lunches, 181,206 free and reduced price breakfasts and 60,540 full price breakfasts are served to PA students.

 Who can provide the service?	The National School Lunch and the School Breakfast Programs are entitlement programs. All public and nonprofit private schools and Residential Child Care Institutions can participate in these programs.																													
 How is it financed?	The federal government guarantees funding for all participating students. During 07-08, PA received \$306 million in federal funds for the two programs. Even full price meals received a small federal subsidy. PA invests \$31 million annually in school breakfast and lunch. Federal and state government reimburse schools for these meals as follows: <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">State Rates</th> <th colspan="2">Federal Rates</th> </tr> <tr> <th>w/o Nutrition Standards</th> <th>w/ Nutrition Standards</th> <th>Lunch</th> <th>Breakfast</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Breakfast</td> <td>10¢</td> <td>11¢</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lunch Rate 1</td> <td>10¢</td> <td>11¢</td> <td>25-27¢</td> <td>26¢</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lunch Rate 2</td> <td>12¢</td> <td>14¢</td> <td>\$2.28 - \$2.30</td> <td>\$1.16 - \$1.44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lunch Rate 3</td> <td>14¢</td> <td>17¢</td> <td>\$2.68 - \$2.70</td> <td>\$1.46 - \$1.74</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Schools that do not serve breakfast receive Lunch Rate 1. Schools that serve breakfast to less than 20% of enrolled students receive Lunch Rate 2. Schools that serve breakfast to 20% or more of enrolled students receive Lunch Rate 3.</p>		State Rates		Federal Rates		w/o Nutrition Standards	w/ Nutrition Standards	Lunch	Breakfast	Breakfast	10¢	11¢			Lunch Rate 1	10¢	11¢	25-27¢	26¢	Lunch Rate 2	12¢	14¢	\$2.28 - \$2.30	\$1.16 - \$1.44	Lunch Rate 3	14¢	17¢	\$2.68 - \$2.70	\$1.46 - \$1.74
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 Who can receive this service	School breakfasts and lunches are either free, reduced-price, or full price. Children who are below 130% of poverty are eligible for Free Meals; students who are between 130 - 185% of poverty are eligible for Reduced-Price Meals. Parents must submit an application to receive reduced price or free meals. At schools with a "Universal School Breakfast Program", all students receive free school breakfast. School-aged SNAP recipients are eligible for free meals.																													
 What is provided?	<p>School breakfast provides an average of at least 1/4 of a child's Recommended Daily Allowances. The guidelines list 4 components: milk; a vegetable or fruit or full strength vegetable or fruit juice; 2 servings of bread or cereal; and 2 servings of meat or other high protein food like peanut butter or eggs. School Lunch consists of 1/3 of a child's Recommended Daily Allowances. The traditional meal plan consists of 4 food components for lunch: meat or meat alternate; grains or bread (must be whole grain, enriched, or contain germ or bran); 2 vegetables or fruit; and milk.</p>																													
 Contact	Sandy Souder at the PA Department of Education at 1-800-331-0129.																													
 Suggestions For advocacy	The National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program are both up for reauthorization in 2010. Hunger Action will keep you posted on our website www.pahunger.org about advocacy opportunities related to getting the best child nutrition programs for the next five years.																													