



July 22, 2016

Tina Namian, Branch Chief
Policy and Program Development Branch, Child Nutrition Programs
Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture

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RE: Recommendations for CACFP Implementation

Dear Ms. Namian:

I am writing on behalf of the California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) to share recommendations for implementation of the new Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutrition standards endorsed by CFPA, the California Department of Education (CDE), the Child Care Food Program Roundtable (Roundtable), and other California CACFP experts. CFPA commends the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) for developing nutrition standards that are science-based, nutrition focused, and feasible for use in child care. We agree with the USDA that the new nutrition standards will elevate the nutritional quality of meals and snacks served under the CACFP. In order to ensure implementation of the standards will support young children's nutritional needs without decreasing participation in CACFP, we urge FNS to consider adopting the recommendations outlined in the attached document.

CFPA is a statewide policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health and well being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food. One of CFPA's main areas of focus is early childhood nutrition. We have lead pioneering efforts to: establish the most health-promoting policy standard across the nation for beverages in child care; require a statewide training dedicated to early childhood nutrition and the benefits of CACFP; and investigate impactful and achievable nutrition standards for all licensed family child care homes in California. CFPA and our California partners are in a unique position to provide USDA with useful insights from California's experience of using policy to improve the nutrition environments in child care settings.

In partnership with the CDE and the Roundtable, CFPA facilitated a series of conference calls in April and May of 2016 with CACFP experts who provided guidance on enhancing the technical assistance and training support provided to all providers, centers, and sponsors who will be affected by the new CACFP nutrition standards. The themes that surfaced during the calls were repackaged into recommendations for implementation and have been endorsed by CFPA, the CDE, the Roundtable, the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, California Child Care Health Program, and the Nutrition Policy Institute.

CFPA thanks the USDA for the time and resources FNS has dedicated for the implementation of CACFP to date. CFPA urges USDA to build upon existing plans by incorporating the recommendations endorsed by our partners and outlined in the attached document. Strategic implementation, including strong technical assistance and training support, will help sustain if not increase the participation of child care centers,

family child care home providers, and afterschool programs participating in CACFP.

If we can provide additional information, please contact Melissa Cannon at 510.433.1122 ext. 102.

Respectfully,



Melissa Cannon
Nutrition Policy Advocate
California Food Policy Advocates



Elyse Homel Vitale
Senior Advocate
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