

School's Out...Who Ate?



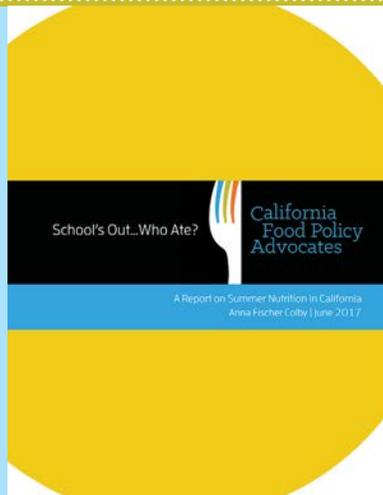
California
Food Policy
Advocates

A Report on Summer Nutrition in California
Anna Fischer Colby | June 2017



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For more information about CFPA, please visit: www.cfpa.net.

Overview

In California, children risk struggling with hunger, unhealthy weight gain and falling behind academically over the summer months. While there are many factors that affect children's health, wellbeing and ability to learn when school is out, one notable loss for many low-income students is access to healthy school meals.

New analysis of Free and Reduced-price Meal data finds that:

- Too many low-income students miss out on the health and academic benefits of free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch during the summer.
- The number of free and reduced-price summer lunches served decreased in 2016.

The lack of access to healthy meals when school is out has broad implications for the health, well-being and academic success of California students.

- Healthy summer meals help students struggling with hunger.
- Summer meals and summer programs support student health and ability to learn throughout the summer and when school is back in session.
- Increased participation in the summer meal programs would result in California receiving tens of millions of dollars in additional federal funding.

Policy and program changes have a huge potential for increasing access to healthy, affordable meals for California kids when school is out. California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) recommends:

- **Fostering** safe and welcoming summer meal environments for immigrant families.
- **Expanding** the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for Children program, nutrition assistance provided on an EBT card which can be used to purchase groceries when school is out of session and school meals are not available.
- **Ensuring** adequate funding for expanded learning programs for underserved students during the summer and afterschool.
- **Elevating** the role of school nutrition programs for meeting academic goals under state and federal school funding and accountability plans, such as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

Available Summer Meal Programs

The **National School Lunch Program** (NSLP), the country's oldest child nutrition program, continues to operate during the summer months at year-round schools and summer school sites.

Many school districts sponsor the **Seamless Summer Food Option** (SSFO) to serve meals during summer school and/or at community-based sites. SSFO allows sponsors to receive the "free" (highest) rate of federal reimbursement for each meal served. In return, SSFO sites must serve all meals free of charge to children and youth. SSFO sites must be located in low-income areas or serve low-income participants.

The **Summer Food Service Program** (SFSP) was originally designed for children who attend schools with a traditional summer break and do not participate in summer school. SFSP sponsors receive federal reimbursements for serving nutritious meals and snacks to children and youth at approved sites. Eligible sites include those that serve low-income children or youth or operate in low-income areas. SFSP is often offered at community-based sites, such as Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and libraries.

More information about site types and eligibility requirements: www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/ssforeq.asp (SSFO) and www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sf/sfspinfo.asp (SFSP).

Major Findings

Too many low-income students miss out on the health and academic benefits of school breakfast and lunch during the summer months.

In summer 2016:

- 85% of low-income students lost access to the health and academic benefits of school lunches. That is 1.7 million low-income children who benefitted from healthy school lunches that missed out on similar lunches during the summer months.
- 91% of low-income students lost access to school breakfast. That is over one million low-income children who benefitted from healthy school breakfasts but missed out on similar breakfasts during the summer (see Table 1).
- Fewer than two free or reduced-price breakfasts were served for every five lunches (see Table 2).

Table 1 Average Daily Participation (ADP) of Children Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Breakfast and Lunch: School Year Compared to Summer, 2016.

	School Year (March & April)	Summer (July)	Children & Youth Served During the School Year but NOT Summer	
			Total	Percent
ADP Lunch	1,977,828	289,754	1,688,073	85%
ADP Breakfast	1,094,574	99,235	995,339	91%

Source: CFPA's analysis of NSLP (public, non-charter school), SFSP, and SSFO data from March, April and July 2016 provided by the California Department of Education. See technical appendix for details.

Table 2 Total Number of Free and Reduced-Price Meals Served, Comparison of Breakfast and Lunch, July 2016.

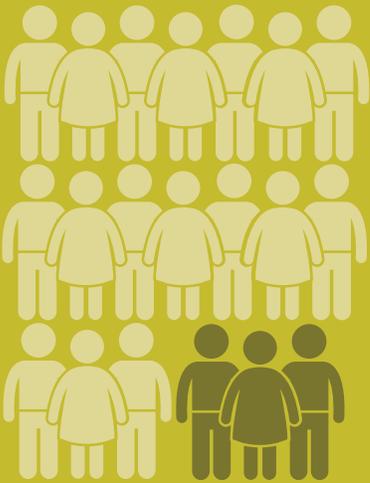
	Lunches	Breakfasts	Difference
NSLP: National School Lunch Program			
K-12 public school sites (non-charter)	1,095,685	617,043	478,642
All other sites*	334,437	296,686	37,751
SSFO: Seamless Summer Food Option (school and community-based sites)	2,550,203	977,525	1,572,678
SFSP: Summer Food Service Program (school and community-based sites)	2,438,952	489,360	1,949,592
Total	6,419,277	2,380,614	4,038,663

*"All other sites" include non-public schools, private schools, charter schools, County Offices of Education, Group Home Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI), juvenile detention centers, camps and other government entities. **Source:** CFPA's analysis of NSLP, SFSP, and SSFO data from July 2016 provided by the California Department of Education. See technical appendix for details.

Our Partners say...

“We have a lot of students that rely on the federal meal programs and when we finish the school year we have a good eight weeks where they don’t have access to these programs. Even if they have access to food, it may not be a healthy meal. At the summer meal sites, students have access to whole grains, proteins, milk and fresh fruits and vegetables every single day.”

– ROBIN HERNANDEZ, ED,
NUTRITION SPECIALIST,
REDLANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT



17 out of every 20 low-income students lost access to the health and academic benefits of school lunches in summer 2016.

The number of children missing out on summer meals is substantial and persistent. And in 2016, the number of lunches served statewide decreased.

The number of free and reduced-price (ADP) lunches served decreased substantially in summer 2016. In July 2016 compared to July 2015:

- The number of FRP lunches served statewide fell by 11%, or over 800,000 meals.
- The number of FRP lunches served fell most dramatically in K-12 public school sites, where they fell by 19% (see Table 3).
- The substantial reduction in the number of FRP summer lunches is a reversal in trend from prior years. After years of substantial declines, July 2013 and 2014 saw substantial gains before plateauing in 2015 and then declining in 2016.¹

Table 3 Total Number of Free and Reduced-Price Summer Lunches Served by Meal Program and Year.

Meal Programs	July 2015	July 2016	% Change (2015-16)	Difference
NSLP: National School Lunch Program				
K-12 public school sites (non-charter)	1,348,274	1,095,685	-19%	252,589
All other sites*	374,317	334,437	-11%	39,880
SSFO: Seamless Summer Food Option (school and community-based sites)				
	2,882,317	2,550,203	-12%	332,114
SFSP: Summer Food Service Program (school and community-based sites)				
	2,635,891	2,438,952	-7%	196,939
Total	7,240,799	6,419,277	-11%	821,522

All other sites include non-public schools, private schools, charter schools, County Offices of Education, Group Home Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI), juvenile detention centers, camps and other government entities. **Source:** CFPA's analysis of NSLP, SFSP, and SSFO data from July 2016 provided by the California Department of Education. See technical appendix for details.

We note that there were three fewer non-holiday weekdays in July 2016 than 2015. This may have been a driving factor in the reduction in FRP meals served in 2016 because a majority of meals served in the summer are served on non-holiday weekdays. However, summer meal sites can receive federal funding to serve meals on any day of the week including weekends and holidays. This option is an underutilized opportunity for expansion in California.



Summer Meal Bright Spot: Lunch at the Library

When the doors open at 11:30am at Ovitt Family Community Library, 200 kids flood in to get their daily meal. A public library may not be where you would expect to find this scene, but it's essential for keeping kids free from hunger during the summer.

Libraries across California are seeing unquestionable success with summer meal programs. In 2016, the number of summer meals served at libraries increased by 42% compared to the year prior. This means that California libraries served nearly an additional 60,000 meals. Summer meals were available across the state in 131 libraries.

At Ovitt Family Community Library, lunch is a busy time in the summer. During this time, children can get a free meal and engage in all the other resources that public libraries offer.

Implications

Although there are many factors that affect children's health, wellbeing and ability to learn when school is out, one notable loss for many low-income students is access to healthy school meals.

Healthy summer meals help students struggling with hunger.

In California, over two million children live in households that struggle to put enough food on the table. That is nearly one in four California kids who may go to bed hungry.² School meals help shield students from struggling with hunger. Over the summer, when students lose access to healthy school meals, hunger may get worse for low-income children.^{3,4}

Furthermore, during the summer, many children experience unhealthy weight gain. Children gain as much weight in the summer as they do in the school year in one third of the time. In the summer, in addition to losing access to healthy school meals, students may gain access to unhealthy foods that are not available at school, as well as have reduced opportunities for physical activity such as recess or physical education classes.⁵ Hunger and unhealthy weight gain are not mutually exclusive, in fact, people with limited or uncertain access to food may be particularly vulnerable to obesity and related health problems.⁶

Summer meals and summer programs support student health and ability to learn throughout the summer and when school is back in session.

Healthy meals provide students with the adequate nutrition they need to learn, grow and thrive throughout the summer months. School meals have been shown to help students succeed academically.^{7,8,9} Conversely, hunger negatively impacts children's health and ability to learn.¹⁰ When children are hungry, it is difficult for them to pay attention and to learn. In the summer, these challenges are magnified by the loss of academic and enrichment options for low-income students.

The negative effects of experiencing hunger and/or accelerated weight gain over the summer affect a child's ability to succeed throughout the school year. Hunger can have long term impacts on a child's health and health problems cause students to miss school. Even temporary struggles with hunger are related to poorer development and health of children.¹⁰ When school is out of session, many low-income children fall further behind their more advantaged peers, widening the achievement gap. Students that fall behind academically over the summer, may not catch back up to their peers during the school year.¹¹

The limited reach of summer meal programs means that California currently misses out on tens of millions of dollars in federal meal reimbursements each year.

1 in 2 children in California live with a foreign-born parent.¹³

An estimated 2 million children live with an undocumented family member.¹⁴

Increased participation in the meal programs would result in tens of millions of dollars in additional federal funding for California.

Increasing participation in the summer meal programs would not only benefit California kids but would draw substantial federal funding into the state through meal reimbursements. Those reimbursements are used to cover costs associated with operating the meal programs, such as food, equipment, and labor. The limited reach of summer meal programs means that California currently misses out on tens of millions of dollars in federal meal reimbursements each year.¹²

Policy Recommendations

Policy and program changes, as well as ensuring adequate funding, have a huge potential for increasing access to healthy, affordable meals for California kids when school is out.

Support Students from Immigrant Families

This summer, some of our state's most vulnerable students, low-income students from immigrant families, face increased risk of going hungry. Recent anti-immigrant actions from the Trump administration and anti-immigrant rhetoric have resulted in widespread fears across immigrant communities. As a result, immigrants may be pulling back from accessing the public benefits for which they or their children are eligible – public benefits that help shield families from experiencing hunger. With schools letting out for the summer, many children from immigrant families won't just lose access to nutritious meals provided by the school meal programs but also a sense of security from immigration enforcement actions. In non-school locations where summer meal programs are available, there is concern that immigrant families may be less likely to show up due to these heightened immigration concerns and perceived loss of security.

Actions to Promote Summer Meals to Immigrant Families

We've found that one of the primary reasons parents like summer meal programs is that they get their children out of the house so they are not watching television or playing video games. At the same time, some immigrant parents are fearful of family members being out of the house. While no one can guarantee with 100% certainty the safety of summer meal programs for participants, there are steps that can be taken to help reassure immigrant families and safeguard their children from struggling with hunger over the summer months.

Schools and teachers are trusted messengers for immigrant families.



We know that a major draw to summer meal programs for immigrant families are academic, social and physical activities.



- The California Department of Education (CDE) should provide support and encouragement to local school districts to effectively message and promote summer meals to immigrant families (using the recommendations below).
- County departments, elected officials, school districts, summer meal sponsors and sites, advocates and others should work together to reach parents with messages about the summer meal programs.

The CDE can help sponsors and community partners create welcoming and comfortable environments for households that may be fearful of participating in summer meal programs. These sponsors and community partners can give reluctant households the information they need to make an informed decisions about participation.

Recommendations for Promoting Summer Meals to Immigrant Families:

- **Enlist trusted messengers.** Schools and teachers are trusted messengers for immigrant families. A flyer, email, Facebook post or other announcement from schools or teachers is the best way to reach families. Other trusted messengers may include community-based organizations such as Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, or local community centers.
- **Communicate that all children are welcome and can receive a free meal.** Do not promise parents and children safety, but do make it clear that they are welcome. Parents would like to see a welcoming, child-friendly, and pro-immigrant image or symbol.
- **If your summer meal site has activities, promote them!** We know that a major draw to summer meal programs for immigrant families are academic, social and physical activities. The meals alone may not be enough to get families to attend the programs.
- **Mention health and academic benefits.** Messages around (1) helping children get out of the house and staying active and healthy, and (2) furthering learning and academic success resonate with parents.
- **Make it clear that programs do not require registration or paperwork.** Indicate to families that no one will be asking them about their immigration status.
- **Provide basic information.** A major barrier to summer meals is lack of information about the programs. Communicate when and where summer meal sites are open to the community and that they are free to all children.¹⁵

A parents says:

"I'd go if [the summer meal site is] close to home. I wouldn't want my daughter and me to be separated too far.



No child should go hungry this summer because of fears of deportation or being separated from their family.

Promoting summer meal programs to immigrant families is an important step to take immediately to help prevent hunger from getting worse for children from immigrant families. However, promotion of summer meals is not enough. Given the deep fears and recognition that no site can provide guaranteed safety, it is worth considering policy actions that can increase the safety of immigrant families while their children are participating in summer meal programs.

Policy Approaches to Foster Safe Spaces for Immigrant Families

To address the risk of summer hunger for immigrant families, CFPA recommends exploring approaches similar to current state legislative efforts, such as AB 699 (O'Donnell) and SB 54 (De León), which if enacted would provide certain safeguards to immigrants in select public places such as schools.

For example, state legislators could consider legislation that would:

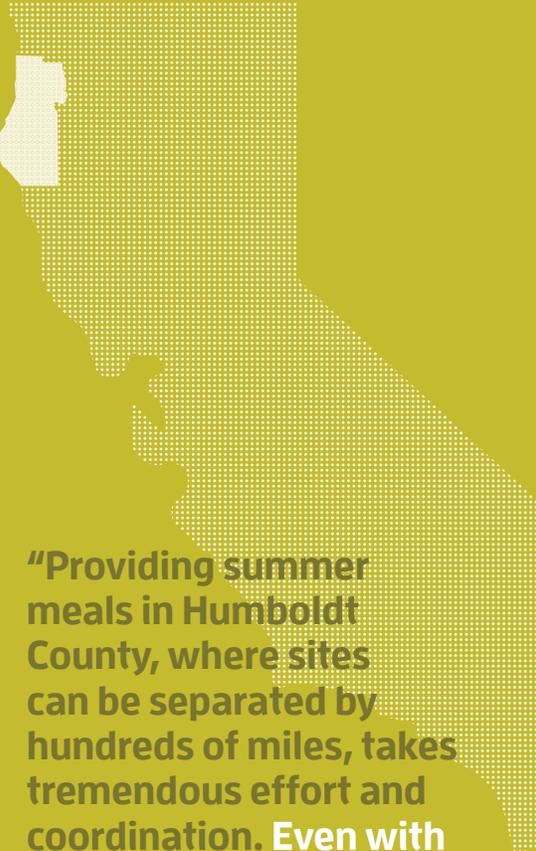
Prohibit...

- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from entering summer meal locations while participants are present
- The collection of information about the immigration status of summer meal participants or their families
- Law enforcement, school police or security departments from engaging in immigration enforcement activities during summer meal times
- Sponsors or sites from providing any information, or access to any databases, about participants for the purpose of immigration enforcement

and Require...

- School districts to provide information to parents before the end of the school year about summer meals and the rights of children to receive meals regardless of immigration status
- Summer meal staff to be trained on how best to support immigrant families. Trainings could include immigrant rights, preventing bullying based on immigration status, or what to do if ICE shows up at a site or if a child becomes separated from their caregiver due to possible immigration enforcement actions.

We know that we need to foster safe spaces, to whatever extent possible, to ensure immigrant families show up to summer meal sites and are able to provide food for their children. No child should go hungry this summer because of fears of deportation or being separated from their family.



Going forward, CFPA will be exploring ways to address summer hunger within broader policy solutions aimed at ensuring all low-income immigrants and their families have access to enough food.

Expand Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) for Children

What is Summer EBT for Children?

The Summer EBT for Children program helps to ensure that low-income children have enough food over the summer months by providing their families with resources that can be used to purchase groceries when school is out of session and school meals are not available. Summer EBT for Children would complement the summer meal programs by providing families with a few extra dollars to support their limited grocery budgets.

Why Summer EBT for Children?

Summer EBT for Children provides access to healthy foods for students that do not have access to summer meal sites

Summer meal sites provide a tremendous service when and where they reach children. However, summer meal sites require participants to travel to specific locations during specific times of the day in order to receive meals. Barriers that prevent many children from accessing summer meal sites include lack of transportation, extreme weather conditions, lack of walkable routes, and threats to neighborhood safety.

Summer EBT for Children reduces hunger and improves nutrition!

Summer EBT for Children has been shown to:

- Reduce hunger for children and their families;
- Reduce consumption of added sugars including those from sugar-sweetened beverages; and
- Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.¹⁶

Summer EBT for Children is a well-tested, effective method to prevent childhood hunger. As of 2017, federal demonstration projects have launched successful Summer EBT for Children in eight states and two tribal nations, but not in California.

“Providing summer meals in Humboldt County, where sites can be separated by hundreds of miles, takes tremendous effort and coordination. Even with the generosity of UPS and the Humboldt Bay Transit Authority to get lunches out to the most rural sites, we are still only reaching a small percentage of eligible children. Summer EBT for Children would help to ensure that children without access to summer meal sites don’t go hungry over the summer months.”

– HEIDI MCHUGH, COMMUNITY EDUCATION & OUTREACH COORDINATOR, FOOD FOR PEOPLE, INC., THE FOOD BANK FOR HUMBOLDT COUNTY



A parent says...

"My girls are loving meeting new friends & learning to try new foods with the encouragement of new friends."

– LUNCH AT THE LIBRARY PARTICIPANT

Actions to Support Summer EBT for Children

California needs multiple solutions to end child hunger – and Summer EBT for Children is one of those solutions.

To bring the benefits of Summer EBT for Children to California:

- California Members of Congress should continue efforts to expand Summer EBT for Children through the legislative process.
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) should expand the existing Summer EBT for Children demonstration projects to include California.
- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) should not wait to begin working with the California Department of Education (CDE) to (1) design a system for delivering Summer EBT for Children to eligible Californians and (2) be prepared to pursue all available federal funding and authority to operate that system.

We applaud the CDSS and CDE for making a strong effort to bring Summer EBT for Children to California, and for the USDA for making that opportunity possible. Going forward, we ask them to double-down and continue to do whatever it takes to bring this valuable resource to California kids.

Ensure Adequate Funding for Expanded Learning Programs

What are expanded learning programs?

Expanded learning programs in California provide high quality education and enrichment programs during the summer and afterschool to many of California's most vulnerable students. These programs also address hunger by providing a nutritious meal or snack to participants. California administers expanded learning programs through the state-funded Afterschool Education and Safety (ASES) programs and the federally-funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs. In California, 21st CCLC and ASES programs operate at over 4,500 sites and enroll nearly 860,000 students.¹⁷

Why expanded learning programs?

21st CCLC and ASES programs:

- **Support academic achievement of high need students,** including low-income students, homeless youth, foster youth, and English learners. California high school students that participate in expanded learning programs perform better in school, have improved attendance and are less likely to be suspended.¹⁸



Our Partners say...

“A lot of families we serve are working families – both mom and dad work, especially during the summer. Their kids are with a caretaker or left on their own. Our summer meal program provides a safe place where kids can come and have lunch. They don’t have to go hungry throughout the day.

– EDGAR LANDEROS, PROGRAM MANAGER, NUEVA VISTA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- **Help to close the achievement and opportunity gap.**

Expanded learning programs have been shown to have positive academic outcomes for participants. In California, expanded learning programs serve high percentages of low-income students and students of color.

- **Increase access to nutritious foods.** In California, all 21st CCLC and ASES programs are required to provide a nutritious meal or snack to participants.

- **Support working families and keep kids safe.** The activities and the food attract children to expanded learning programs where they are safe and engaged while their parents are at work.¹⁹

Threats to expanded learning program funding leave underserved students at risk of losing out on the health and academic benefits of these programs.

- The President’s budget calls for eliminating funding for the 21st CCLC programs, the largest federal funding stream for summer and afterschool programs.
- State funding for ASES programs has not increased for a decade despite rising costs, demands, and expectations on the programs. If not addressed, ASES programs risk being forced to close their doors to students in need.

Actions to Support Expanded Learning

The loss of expanded learning programming due to inadequate funding would have a direct impact on hunger and academic opportunities for many of our most vulnerable students. To ensure expanded learning programs continue to work for California kids:

- ➔ Congress should maintain or increase current funding levels for the 21st CCLC program in the FY 2018 Federal Budget.
- ➔ The California State Legislature and the Governor should ensure adequate funding is available to grow and maintain the state’s expanded learning infrastructure.

Current efforts to maintain the existing expanded learning infrastructure in California include SB 78: After School Funding. SB 78 was introduced by Senator Leyva and is sponsored by the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA3).

CA3, <http://www.saveafterschool.com>, and the Afterschool Alliance, <http://afterschoolalliance.org/challenge.cfm>, have more information about actions you can take to support expanded learning in California.

Elevate the Role of School Nutrition Programs for Meeting State Academic Goals

The state's education funding structure, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), provides an opportunity to support school nutrition programs, including summer meal programs. Under the LCFF, districts have more leeway to spend education dollars to address the underlying needs that impact student achievement, such as those of students struggling with hunger or poor nutrition.

The LCFF:

- **Transfers more control of education spending to the local level**, allowing for greater flexibility for school districts to fund efforts that address the underlying factors for poor academic achievement.
- **Directs additional funds to districts for high need students**, including low-income, English learners, and foster youth.
- **Increases transparency and community engagement** by requiring districts to develop a publicly available funding plan, the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), and engage parents and other stakeholders in the development of the LCAP.

How do school nutrition programs support academic success?

School nutrition programs, including summer meals programs, can be an effective tool to help children reach their full academic potential. Healthy and well-nourished children are more likely to attend class, be ready to learn, stay engaged, and perform well in school. School nutrition programs also help mitigate the harmful effects of poverty on students' physical health, emotional wellbeing, and overall development.²⁰

Actions to help ensure that school nutrition programs support academic success

The California Department of Education (CDE) should:

- ➔ Encourage districts to consider how student nutrition could further their academic goals such as improving student attendance and reducing suspensions.
- ➔ Provide guidance to districts on how to support student nutrition through their Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs).



Resources @ cfpa.net

For more information about how school nutrition can be supported in the **Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)**, visit <http://cfpa.net/nutrition-and-education-policy>.

Where you'll find...

- Case studies of school districts that have incorporated nutrition into their LCAP
- School Nutrition for Academic Success, a guide to incorporating nutrition into the LCAP
- A summary of the research linking school nutrition to academic success
- PowerPoint and talking points for use when advocating for nutrition in LCAPs
- Video Explaining LCFF and LCAP
- A basic overview of LCFF and LCAP for school nutrition advocates



If the CDE is serious about supporting the whole child, adequate nutrition should be prioritized alongside other supports and services for our high need students such as enhanced curriculum, expanded learning and school counselors.

The CDE Nutrition Services Division (NSD) has made an effort to educate districts and other stakeholders about the connection between nutrition and academic success as well as opportunities to support nutrition programs through the LCAP. We encourage the CDE to grow, embrace and promote these efforts throughout the Department. Adequate nutrition for our students should not be an issue siloed within the NSD. If the CDE is serious about supporting the whole child, adequate nutrition should be prioritized alongside other supports and services for our high need students such as enhanced curriculum, expanded learning and school counselors.

While the benefits of healthy meals are widely understood, the connection between our school nutrition programs and academic success is often overlooked or not made a priority. With the move towards more local control for how education dollars are spent, it is important that State actions communicate that school nutrition programs are a priority and an important resource for helping children reach their full academic potential.



...now is not the time to rely solely on federal action. Now is the time to make the change we want to see in our state.

... while we fight to maintain what we have and know works, we must continue to push for the expansion of innovative programs, like Summer EBT for Children, that have been proven to reduce childhood hunger.

Support the Report

School's Out...Who Ate? is the only analysis of state and county-specific summer nutrition data in California. CFPA would like to continue producing this annual publication – and expand on its content.

If you would like to support this work, please contact George Manalo-LeClair, CFPA's executive director, at 510.433.1122 ext. 103 or george@cfpa.net.

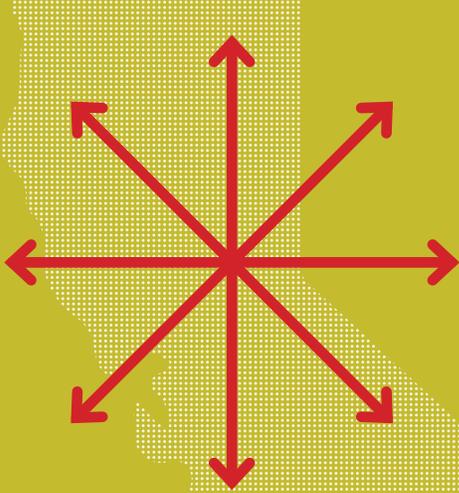
Conclusion

The need for nutritious, affordable meals persists year-round, yet many low-income students lose access to the health and academic benefits of meals during the summer. The lack of access to and participation in summer meals and programs has wide-ranging implications for the health and wellbeing of California kids and our state; California kids risk going hungry, experiencing unhealthy weight gain, and falling behind academically over the summer months.

California must do better for our children.

In the coming months, we must fight to maintain federal policy and programs that provide needed healthy meals to our most vulnerable residents. This call to action goes far beyond ensuring that the FY 2018 Federal Budget maintains funding for 21st CCLC programs, but ensuring that our federal nutrition assistance programs – from summer meals to CalFresh – continue to be a lifeline for those struggling with hunger in our state. And while we fight to maintain what we have and know works, we must continue to push for the expansion of innovative programs, like Summer EBT for Children, that have been proven to reduce childhood hunger.

However, now is not the time to rely solely on federal action. Now is the time to make the change we want to see in our state. At the state level, we can leverage our flexible education funding structure to address educational equity and the underlying needs that affect student achievement. We can work to ensure that our state supports immigrant children and families through summer meal programs and beyond. It is time for our state and the men and women that represent us in the legislature to think proactively in the face of new threats to summer meals and nutrition assistance programs as a whole. And it is time that we come together in solidarity and in partnership with others working hard to protect the rights of all Californians.



Across California counties, 60 to 100% of low-income children and youth are missing out on summer lunches. These are children that benefit from free or reduced-price lunches during the school year but not during the summer.

Data Tables*

This table includes a county-by-county summary of summer and school meal data from 2016.

*** Please note that the following numbers should not be compared to findings from reports prior to 2016 due to a substantial change in methodology.**

Average Daily Participation of Children Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunch, School Year and Summer 2016

County	School Year	Summer	Children & Youth Served During the School Year but NOT Summer	
			Total	Percent
Alameda	41,215	10,681	30,534	74%
Alpine	52	–	52	100%
Amador	961	1	960	100%
Butte	9,583	1,098	8,485	89%
Calaveras	1,570	269	1,301	83%
Colusa	2,161	179	1,982	92%
Contra Costa	37,603	7,952	29,651	79%
Del Norte	1,254	337	916	73%
El Dorado	4,239	388	3,851	91%
Fresno	96,181	6,811	89,370	93%
Glenn	2,195	149	2,045	93%
Humboldt	4,771	566	4,205	88%
Imperial	16,313	1,738	14,575	89%
Inyo	754	88	666	88%
Kern	81,972	3,571	78,401	96%
Kings	11,022	506	10,516	95%
Lake	3,701	408	3,293	89%
Lassen	867	33	834	96%
Los Angeles	507,547	110,801	396,747	78%
Madera	14,606	1,219	13,387	92%
Marin	4,520	701	3,820	85%
Mariposa	481	2	479	100%
Mendocino	4,487	978	3,509	78%
Merced	28,802	2,991	25,811	90%
Modoc	591	74	517	87%
Mono	448	5	443	99%

Chart continues on next page.



When school's out and summer begins, nearly 1.7 million low-income children in California lose access to nutritious meals that support their health and ability to reach their full academic potential.

County	School Year	Summer	Children & Youth Served During the School Year but NOT Summer	
			Total	Percent
Monterey	30,183	2,888	27,295	90%
Napa	4,461	443	4,017	90%
Nevada	1,527	202	1,325	87%
Orange	143,097	19,733	123,364	86%
Placer	9,964	915	9,048	91%
Plumas	472	128	345	73%
Riverside	165,730	16,266	149,464	90%
Sacramento	78,174	9,403	68,771	88%
San Benito	3,572	783	2,790	78%
San Bernadino	168,055	6,774	161,281	96%
San Diego	126,098	33,772	92,326	73%
San Francisco	14,892	5,956	8,936	60%
San Joaquin	49,123	3,791	45,332	92%
San Luis Obispo	7,009	572	6,437	92%
San Mateo	16,317	4,247	12,070	74%
Santa Barbara	24,990	3,866	21,124	85%
Santa Clara	50,002	8,737	41,266	83%
Santa Cruz	10,284	1,515	8,769	85%
Shasta	7,618	604	7,013	92%
Sierra	82	-	82	100%
Siskiyou	1,863	181	1,681	90%
Solano	16,177	1,810	14,368	89%
Sonoma	13,747	3,234	10,513	76%
Stanislaus	41,708	2,193	39,515	95%
Sutter	6,597	466	6,131	93%
Tehama	4,815	285	4,530	94%
Trinity	566	31	534	94%
Tulare	48,214	2,506	45,709	95%
Tuolumne	1,544	-	1,544	100%
Ventura	37,884	5,428	32,456	86%
Yolo	8,865	1,356	7,509	85%
Yuba	6,301	120	6,181	98%
Total	1,977,828	289,754	1,688,073	85%

Data Source: CFPA's analysis of NSLP (public, non-charter school), SFSP, and SSFO data from March, April and July 2016 provided by the California Department of Education. See technical appendix for details.

Total Number of Free and Reduced-Price (FRP) Breakfasts Served, July 2016

	Total FRP Breakfasts
NSLP: National School Lunch Program	
K-12 public school sites (non-charter)	617,043
All other sites*	296,686
SSFO: Seamless Summer Food Option (school and community-based sites)	977,525
SFSP: Summer Food Service Program (school and community-based sites)	489,360
Total	2,380,614

*All other sites" include non-public schools, private schools, charter schools, County Offices of Education, Group Home Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI), juvenile detention centers, camps and other government entities. **Source:** CFPA's analysis of NSLP, SFSP, and SSFO data from July 2016 provided by the California Department of Education. See technical appendix for details.

Data Sources & Methodology

Data Sources

The California Department of Education provided data on the number of lunches and breakfasts served for all site operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Seamless Summer Food Option (SSFO), or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). These data were provided by month for March, April, and July.

Methodology

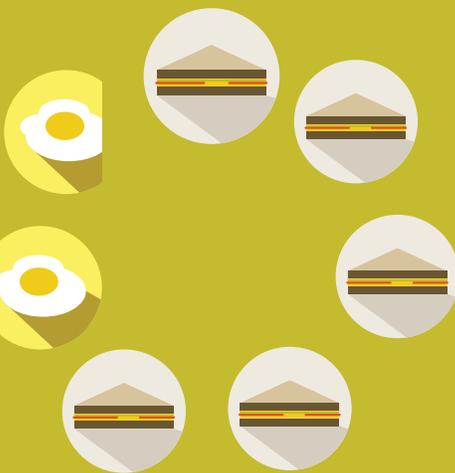
Statistics comparing the school year and summer were calculated using data for all sites operating SSFO and SFSP, and for public, non-charter school sites operating NSLP. Summer statistics were calculated using data from July. School year statistics were calculated using data from March and April.

Average Daily Meal Participation

Estimates of the number of children and youth receiving free or reduced-price (FRP) lunches and breakfasts per day, statewide and by county, during the summer and school year were calculated using the steps below.

Summer: Average Daily Meal Participation

$$\frac{\text{Total FRP Meals Served in July}}{\text{Number of Weekdays in July (21)}} = \text{Average Daily Meal Participation, Summer}$$



Fewer than two free or reduced-price breakfasts are served for every five lunches during the summer in California.

School Year: Average Daily Meal Participation

$$\begin{array}{rcccl} \text{Total FRP Meals} & & \text{Number of} & & \text{Average Daily} \\ \text{Served in} & \div & \text{Weekdays in} & = & \text{Meal Participation,} \\ \text{March \& April} & & \text{March \& April (44)} & & \text{School Year} \end{array}$$

Average daily participation rates from this report should not be compared to data from reports prior to 2016 due to a substantial change in methodology.

Children & Youth Served During the School Year but NOT Summer

The number of children at risk for summer hunger is the difference between (a) the average number of children and youth being served free or reduced-price school lunches each day in March & April and (b) the average number of children and youth being served free or reduced-price lunches each day in July. The same method was used to estimate the children and youth served during the school year but NOT summer, for each county.

Challenges and Limitations

Summer vs. School Year

The meal statistics in this report attempt to compare meals served during the extended summer break to those served while school is in session. Given that most schools are on break during the month of July, data from this time period was used to estimate participation in “summer meal programs.” However, due to limits to the specificity of the data, the July meal counts may also capture meals served at schools that are in session, such as those that operate on a year-round calendar. Similarly, March and April data were chosen to estimate participation in meal programs while school is in session. However, the March and April data may also include some meals served during extended breaks for some schools, such as those operating on a year-round schedule.

Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch

The estimated “average daily participation” is most accurately interpreted as the average number of children in California who would receive an FRP meal on any given weekday if all of the meals served during the month were provided on weekdays and no meals were provided on weekends. With the data available for this analysis, we are unable to determine which days during the month meals were served nor how participation varied from day to day, though such variation is likely. We do know that many

The analysis for this report was conducted with data provided by the California Department of Education (CDE). CFPA appreciates the CDE's partnership on this report and other data-driven projects.

Average daily participation rates from this report should not be compared to data from reports prior to 2016 due to a substantial change in methodology.

sites did not serve meals on all weekdays and that some sites served meals on some weekend days during the month.

Free or Reduced-price Meals

The statistics comparing the school year and summer in this report are calculated using data on FRP lunches for public, non-charter school sites for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and all sites for the Seamless Summer Food Option (SSFO) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The intent of these analyses is to better understand the reach of meal programs with respect to low-income children and youth who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. However, while meals are provided free of charge to children and youth served by SFSP and SSFO meal sites, some participating children and youth may not meet individual eligibility criteria for FRP meals. SFSP and SSFO sites must be located in low-income areas or serve low-income participants. However, sites that meet these requirements serve all children in attendance for free whether or not they have been verified as income-eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Footnotes

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CFPA commends program administrators for their commitment to expanding summer nutrition programs in California. In addition, we respectfully acknowledge the hundreds of agencies and thousands of site staff who tackle the difficult work of providing nutritious, affordable summer meals to children throughout our state. Specifically, we would like to thank our partners in the California Summer Meal Coalition. To learn more about the Coalition visit: www.ca-ilg.org/about-summer-meal-coalition.

Where to Find Us

Food insecurity exists in all 58 counties in California, but so do solutions. That's why CFPA staff travel by plane, train, car, and bike to advocate for improved nutrition and health. No matter where we are in the state, we are only a click away.

Stay current online: www.cfpa.net

Find our Advocates: www.cfpa.net/contact-us

Support our work: www.cfpa.net/donate

Join our mailing list: www.cfpa.net/subscribe

Follow us on Twitter: @CAFoodPolicy



California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) is a statewide public policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food.

Photographs: Healthy Ontario (page 6); Bill Lovejoy, Nueva Vista Community Resources, a Program of Community Bridges, Santa Cruz County (page 9).

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