

AB 569 (Garcia)

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ISSUE

Research has shown that school breakfast makes a strong contribution to children's health and academic success. For low-income students, access to school breakfast may mean the difference between starting the school day well-fueled for learning and sitting in class with a stomach that's empty or full of junk food. Yet participation in school breakfast remains stubbornly low. One barrier to greater participation is access. Despite persistent local, state and national efforts to increase the number of schools offering breakfast, not all California schools with a significant number of low-income students offer this program. As a result, thousands of kids don't get the morning nutrition they need to learn and thrive.

NEED

In January 2006, AB 1916 was introduced to require high-need schools that are eligible for extra federal meal reimbursement to offer breakfast, unless they experienced a financial hardship. Despite no opposition to the bill, AB 1916 stalled because information was unavailable as to the precise number of schools and students who would be affected and the cost to the state. AB 569 is designed to retrieve that information, so that the Legislature can make an informed decision about California's breakfast program.

REQUEST

CFPA requests the Legislature take the following actions:

Action : Assess the Impact of a Promising Solution to California's Breakfast Gap	Require the Department of Education to calculate the number of non-SBP schools eligible for "Severe Need" reimbursement and how much it would cost to require them to offer breakfast.
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HISTORY

Numerous bills (including AB 2395 in 2002 and AB 2200 in 2004) have aimed at requiring all, or a subset, of California schools to offer the School Breakfast Program. SB1041 (in 1999) would have required all schools with 75 or more low-income students to offer the School Breakfast Program, but the bill was vetoed by Governor Davis. Most recently, AB 1916 (Garcia) would have required all schools eligible for extra federal reimbursement to offer breakfast. Despite the fact that it had no opposition on record, the bill died. In 2005, SB 281 was adopted to provide schools with additional reimbursement for serving extra fruit with breakfast.

OUTCOMES

- California legislators will be well-equipped by April 2007 to decide whether to take a significant, affordable step towards closing California's breakfast gap.