

## Policy Recommendations

### Federal Policy Recommendations

1. Congress should commission a study to provide a national indicator of participation in summer learning, enrichment, and recreation programs, including measures that assess access to meals, whether federally or privately funded.
2. As Congress implements the Budget Control Act of 2011, which steadily reduces annually appropriated investments and programs, including Community Development Block Grants and other resources that support municipal programming for students during summer months, the impact on summer meal access and participation should be measured and published.
3. USDA should ensure that SFSP meals comply with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.<sup>1</sup>

### State Policy Recommendations

1. State Superintendent Torlakson should initiate and coordinate a state convening to develop legislative, administrative, and fiscal solutions addressing the summer learning and nutrition gaps.
2. The Legislature should require the state to collect and track data describing the availability of summer school and summer learning programs
3. The Legislature and Governor should support AB 2555 (Carter) to strengthen the process through which applications for summer school meal waivers are evaluated.
4. The California Department of Education should promote SB 429 (DeSaulnier) that provides school districts with increased flexibility to devote existing resources to summer programs.
5. The California Department of Education should promote and monitor implementation of increased outreach requirements included in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (Child Nutrition Reauthorization), focusing on well-tested outreach strategies.
6. The California Department of Education should encourage and employ new uses of technology in promotion and outreach. For example, information (in multiple languages) about summer meals sites should be available on a searchable map.
7. As soon as the state budget permits, the Legislature and education leaders should provide adequate resources for school districts to offer robust summer programs that include federally funded summer meals. Summer learning, summer enrichment, and summer nutrition must be a priority to close the achievement gap, combat hunger, and prevent obesity among California students.

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<sup>1</sup> This process is nearly complete for meals served through the National School Lunch Program and is scheduled to occur in 2012 for meals served through the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

8. The California Department of Education should monitor ongoing federal demonstration projects related to summer nutrition. CDE should develop recommendations for adopting or adapting the project strategies for use in California and report those recommendations to the Legislature and State Superintendent.

### Local Recommendations

School boards and school districts should:

1. Provide students and families with information about nearby summer meal sites before school ends. Once school has closed for the summer, schools should continue outreach efforts through automatic phone messaging systems and other means.
2. Seek to preserve summer school programs.
3. Ensure that all summer programs operate in conjunction with federally funded nutrition programs.
4. Wherever possible, ensure that school sites serve children from the surrounding neighborhood whether or not summer school is operating at those sites.

School nutrition services departments, municipal recreation programs, food banks, and local advocates should:

1. Convene to identify gaps in the availability of summer meal sites and marketing opportunities for existing sites.
2. Utilize evidence-based promotion and outreach strategies to inform families about summer meal programs.
3. Recruit additional SFSP meal vendors, sponsors, and sites.
4. Briefly survey participants and their parents about the meal program to identify potential adjustments in menus, service, and environment.

### Research Recommendation

1. Summer meal advocates, administrators, and academic partners should develop and implement a summer nutrition research agenda to better understand (a) what nutrition resources are available to California's low-income children during the summer, particularly among those children who do not participate in the federal summer meal programs; and (b) the impact of the federal summer meal programs on the quality and adequacy of children's diets.

For the full report and additional resources, please visit: <http://cfpa.net/sowa-2012>.