



# 2016 Position Paper

Every school day, 30 million children depend on school nutrition programs to nourish their bodies and minds. School nutrition programs are expected to operate as businesses, without relying on school district funds. However, these historically under-funded programs are struggling to manage increased food and operating costs, heightened by recent regulatory mandates. As a result, the financial sustainability of these programs is threatened, to the detriment of the students, school districts and communities they serve.

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) represents 56,000 professionals committed to serving students nutritious meals while being responsible stewards of federal funds. SNA urges Congress to help restore the fiscal solvency of school nutrition programs and streamline requirements to ease administrative burdens on schools and families. SNA requests that Congress:

## **CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION:**

- **Swiftly pass a robust Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill, including the Senate agreement on school meal standards, so school nutrition programs can responsibly plan for the upcoming school year.**

## **FUNDING:**

- **Increase the per-meal reimbursement for school breakfast and lunch by 35 cents to ensure School Food Authorities (SFAs) can afford to meet federal requirements.** Prior to implementation of any new legislation and regulations, Congress should provide full funding to cover all related costs identified through economic analysis.
- **Provide 10 cents per breakfast in USDA Foods to support the School Breakfast Program.** Currently, SFAs only receive commodity support for school lunch.

## **PROGRAM SIMPLIFICATION:**

- **Provide \$1 million for an independent study of federal reporting requirements for Child Nutrition Programs in an effort to develop a more efficient, unified and consolidated reporting system.** Duplicative and overly burdensome administrative mandates divert school nutrition professionals' attention from their mission of serving students.

## **UNPAID MEAL CHARGES:**

- **Compel USDA to complete its report and implement regulations that effectively address debt arising from unpaid meal charges.** Unpaid meal charges by students continue to increase, and school nutrition programs are unable to absorb these costs. In 2010, Congress instructed USDA to report on this issue and gave USDA the authority to implement regulations to address the problem of unpaid meal charges, per Section 143 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (P.L. 111-296).