**TEMPLATE LETTER TO SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADERS**

**Urgent: Federal School Meal Budget Cuts – Local Impact Assessment**

Dear [Superintendent/Principal/Business Official's Name],

I am writing to provide critical information about [proposed federal budget cuts](https://schoolnutrition.org/sna-news/proposed-school-meal-cuts-prompt-nationwide-advocacy/) that would severely impact [State/District] and increase unpaid meal debt, administrative burdens, and food insecurity among our students.

**Local Food for Schools**

USDA [terminated](https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/10/usda-cancels-local-food-purchasing-for-schools-food-banks-00222796) federal funding agreements to purchase healthy, local and regional foods for school meals. An estimated $660 million in funds through the Local Food for Schools (LFS) program for 2025 will no longer be available to support local producers and assist schools and childcare facilities in expanding fresh, local menu options. [View the chart of state funding.](https://schoolnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/LFS-LFPA-and-LFPA-Plus-Award-Table-_-Agricultural-Marketing-Service.pdf)

**Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows schools in high-poverty areas to offer free school breakfast and lunch to all students without cumbersome applications. The proposed changes to the CEP eligibility threshold would eliminate [X number/percentage] of [State/District] school districts from CEP. This [document](https://frac.org/blog/new-proposal-drastically-reduces-number-of-schools-eligible-for-community-eligibility-provision) shows the [State] and lists each district.

**Key Decision Makers**

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the [Education and Workforce Committee](https://edworkforce.house.gov/committee/fullcommittee.htm) is responsible for school meal program policy. The Committee is currently tasked with finding $330 billion in budget cuts over 10 years.

The proposed changes to CEP would cut $3 billion over ten years (approximately $300 million per year) from school meal programs, according to a House Ways and Means Committee [document](https://schoolnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Reconciliation-Options-2025.pdf).

**What would happen when a school/district loses CEP?** Without CEP, students would no longer have guaranteed access to free, healthy school meals to support learning. Families would have to navigate the complex free and reduced-price meal application process and school nutrition staff would be burdened by administrative costs and paperwork. Families struggling to afford school meals would accumulate unpaid meal debt, impacting meal program and school district budgets. The financial costs would force school meal programs to reevaluate food choices, staffing and meal prices.

￼**Income Verification Requirements**

Congress has proposed requiring income verification with every free and reduced-price meal application, but schools simply do not have the staff, software or systems to collect and process all the additional paperwork required. Given [widespread](https://schoolnutrition.org/sna-news/sna-releases-2025-position-paper/) labor shortages and very limited budgets, school meal programs struggle to manage the already burdensome application process and verify income for a sampling of submitted applications. This mandate would prohibitively delay benefits for eligible families, causing students to go hungry and unpaid meal debt to rise. School nutrition staff would be buried in paperwork, diverting them from their core mission of preparing and serving healthy meals that nourish children.

**What can be done?**

Our families should be encouraged to tell Congress how this would affect the local community. I have communicated to [local representative's name] office about how the [State/District] would be affected. Please consider providing information to our families and fellow school district decision makers. The School Nutrition Association (SNA) provides this [link to easily take action](https://schoolnutrition.quorum.us/campaign/108156/).

**Too Long Didn't Read (TLDR)**

Federal budget reconciliation cuts could upend our local schools and limit access to free school meals for [X number] [State/District] students. Congress is proposing to cut $3 billion over 10 years ($300 million per year) from the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), providing free breakfast and lunch to students in high-poverty areas. This would cause [X out of Y] [State/District] schools to lose CEP eligibility.

Thank you for taking time to review this. SNA is working hard in Washington, D.C along with partner organizations to communicate what effects this cut would have on our schools. I remain hopeful that feeding kids can remain an important bipartisan goal.

I look forward to your thoughts and keeping you informed.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Your Contact Information]