

New York State

**PTA**<sup>®</sup>

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## Leading the Way



No child should ever go hungry. And no child should ever be shamed for not having enough money to eat.

According to the latest NYS School Report Card, 55% of our students are economically disadvantaged and more than 50% of our school children qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.

School and summer food service programs, and other nutrition initiatives, such as backpack programs, are critical for families and children.

# No Student, No Child, Should Ever Go Hungry

Child hunger is a critical issue facing families, communities and our state.

A 2016 USDA report entitled “Household Food Security in the United States in 2016” offered that 1 in every 8 New York households (12.5%) are food insecure – lacking access to sufficient food for a healthy lifestyle.

More than 50% of our New York school children now qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. According to Hunger Solutions New York, more than 1 million children in New York rely on nutrition assistance programs year-round.

**NYS PTA fully supports the new proposals in the Executive Budget to expand access to food for children:**

- Breakfast After the Bell – requiring schools with more than 70 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch to provide breakfast after the school day has begun, either breakfast in the classroom, extended cafeteria hours, and/or food kiosks and vending machines that dispense healthy breakfasts. We also support the \$7 million in capital funds for equipment and \$5 million for reimbursement to schools for costs of increased numbers of meals served;
- Ban Lunch Shaming – legislation to ban lunch shaming practices in schools, prohibiting schools from serving an alternative lunch to children who cannot pay;
- Farm to School Program – increases to the existing Farm to School grant program, from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million;
- Farm-fresh, locally grown foods at schools – increases in reimbursement for schools from \$0.06 per meal to \$0.25 per meal for any district that purchases at least 30% of its food from NY farmers. However, we ask for an amendment, adjusting this language to reflect that a school district would have to purchase 30% of its foods dedicated to lunch service to receive this increased lunch reimbursement; and
- Food Pantries on Campuses – require SUNY and CUNY campuses to either provide physical food pantries or enable students to receive food through a different “stigma-free” arrangement.

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