

Academy Recommendations for Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Congress has an opportunity in 2021 to build upon the success of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to continue to strengthen and expand the reach of these child nutrition programs that provide a system of nutrition support and are a critical line of defense against food insecurity for millions of America’s children. The Academy will take a leadership role in moving forward this important legislation with the following recommendations:

Academy Recommendations	Bills for Child Nutrition Reauthorization that the Academy Supports
<p>Nutrition Education and Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase research that provides evidence-based improvements for comprehensive, culturally appropriate and nationwide nutrition education and promotion approaches that foster healthy behaviors, educational attainment and lifelong health for all children • Support and increase funds to ensure that strong, comprehensive and culturally appropriate nutrition education and promotion is included in the authorization and then provided for all child nutrition programs • Provide adequate funds to help all states build a state-level leadership infrastructure for comprehensive nutrition education and promotion led by qualified professionals in which every state would develop a nutrition education and promotion plan to promote, coordinate and provide nutrition education and promotion, and leadership training in all child nutrition programs • Support efforts to make policy, systems and environmental changes to maximize the impact of nutrition education and promotion • Maintain and strengthen WIC Nutrition Education, including breastfeeding support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Nutrition Education in Schools Act
<p>The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give permanent authority to USDA Secretary to provide waivers and flexibilities during a declared emergency • Support evidence-based meal and nutrition standards that align with the latest <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> and are reviewed and updated as necessary and on an established timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Food Modernization Act • Universal School Meals Program Act • CARE for KIDS Act

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and amplify the voices of Academy members leading the way in providing healthy, appealing school meals to children • Support strong professional standards requirements for school nutrition professionals • Provide adequate funding for schools to purchase, prepare and serve healthy, quality foods and beverages for school meals and snacks • Continue and increase USDA Foods support for the School Breakfast Program • Provide adequate funding to USDA to provide training and technical assistance to support maintenance and attainment of nutrition standards, as well as the skills necessary to run a successful program • Increase funding mechanisms for updated infrastructure and equipment to school kitchens • Cease and desist the enforcement of the Paid Lunch Equity provision of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act until USDA can further explore the reason for the decreased participation in the National School Lunch Program • Ensure equal and equitable school meals by supporting healthy school meals for all and the Community Eligibility Provision • Urge USDA and the US Department of Education to develop best practices and guidance to ensure school schedules provide students adequate time to eat healthy school meals 	
<p>The Summer Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and improve access to and participation in summer meal programs • Support efforts to and funding for partnerships and collaboration between the public and private sectors to promote innovative approaches to feeding children in the summer, especially among rural or remote areas and other high-risk areas where summer meal participation has been low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Meals Act
<p>The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support efforts to invest in improvements to information systems and technology to better serve WIC participants including documentation transfer, online, texting, telehealth and app tools to support breast- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wise Investment in Children (WIC) Act

<p>feeding and nutrition education, and enhance the clinic and shopping experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support nutrition and breastfeeding counseling as successful cost-effective health care services • Support evidence-based, prescriptive WIC Food Package • Support expansion of funding for breastfeeding peer counseling services • Continue to support efforts to conduct program evaluation including data collection, research, training of staff, and innovation • Support programmatic changes that will improve maternal and child health outcomes • Promote and expand WIC Farmers Market Program • Support for expansion of WIC on tribal lands and indigenous food access 	
<p>The Child and Adult Care Food Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the successful implementation of the new healthier nutrition standards for meals and snacks in CACFP • Support adequate funding for CACFP nutrition and wellness education and other training efforts led by qualified staff • Support efforts to increase access to additional reimbursable meals and snacks for children in full day child care • Streamline access to healthy meals for all children, such as those identified in the CACFP Paperwork Reduction Report Recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Healthy Foods for Young Children Act
<p>The Farm to School Grant Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding and support to build upon the success of and growing demand for the Farm to School Grant Program, including continued expansion to early care and education settings, summer, after school and tribal communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm to School Act • Kids Eat Local Act
<p>The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and expand the reach of the successful Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for elementary students from predominantly economically disadvantaged families to support a reduction in chronic disease through improved dietary quality • Support the current criteria for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program by requiring that all fruits and vegetables provided must be fresh 	