

February 11, 2025

Dear Senators,

The Hunger-Free Schools campaign is writing to express our appreciation for your ongoing support of the Free School Meal Program for all students in Minnesota.

This critical investment has not only ensured that our schools are hunger-free, but has also eliminated stigma from lunchrooms, reduced the paperwork strain on Minnesotan families and schools, and improved food security for the growing number of families struggling to put food on the table at home.

Providing free school meals to all students will also pay dividends in terms of our educational outcomes. Studies show that school meal participation lessens the achievement gap and allows students to focus on what really matters when they're at school – learning. In a recent survey of parents across Minnesota, 52% noted that free school meals have contributed to their child attending school regularly, 47% said they are doing better in school, and 46% said it has contributed to their feeling of belonging.

Parents and students alike have shared how much this program means to them. One parent reflected on its impact on mental health, saying, *"I think it alleviates stress on the kids because my sons not worried anymore."* A student emphasized how it supports families in need, sharing, *"I think it saves kids from feeling maybe embarrassed or families that don't... meet the exact like cut off... because they make a little too much money, but they're still struggling to get by. I think I think it really helps."*

Providing free school meals to all students is an investment in Minnesota's future. It supports student success, working parents, teachers and nutrition staff, and strengthens our state's foundation for a solid and sustainable future.

Thank you for providing the sustenance our students need today to be the healthy, thriving leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

The Hunger Free Schools Coalition



Advocates for Better Health  
Allina Health  
American Diabetes Association  
Appetite for Change  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota  
Cargill  
Children's Minnesota  
EdAllies  
Education Minnesota

Every Meal  
Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)  
General Mills  
Land O'Lakes  
Land Stewardship Project  
Local Public Health Association  
MAZON  
Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid  
Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Minnesota Business Coalition for Racial Equity  
Minnesota Farmers Union  
Minnesota School Social Workers Association  
Multicultural Autism Action Network  
Second Harvest Heartland  
SEIU 284  
Share Our Strength  
Taher Inc.  
The Food Group  
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