



AB 1240 (Bonta and Thurmond)

Breakfast After the Bell: Improving Academic Achievement

Summary

AB 1240 will improve students' academic achievement, attendance, and mental and physical health by ensuring that more children in California, particularly those served by high-need schools, have access to school breakfast.

Background

California requires non-charter public schools to make a nutritious, free or reduced-price (FRP) meal available each school day to any students who meet federal eligibility criteria. Most often, the school meal provided to students is lunch.

Almost 20 percent of K-12 California public schools do not offer breakfast.¹ The majority of schools that offer breakfast only do so early in the morning before the school day begins. As a result, students who are unable to arrive at school early, due to unreliable transportation, hectic morning routines, or other factors, are unable to eat school breakfast. These systematic challenges reflect the fact that the School Breakfast Program reaches only half of the students served by the School Lunch Program.

After-the-bell breakfast models are fiscally viable strategies that bring the benefits of breakfast to more students; these models integrate breakfast into the school day during periods such as extended passing periods, mid-morning breaks, or at the start of homeroom. Once after-the-bell models were implemented, Los Angeles Unified School District increased breakfast participation from 30 to 80% of students eligible for FRP meals.

Three out of four public school students in California miss out on the health and academic benefits of school breakfast. This is a total of 4.3 million California children who go to school hungry and distracted.² A large body of scientific research shows that students who eat breakfast have improved cognitive function, academic performance, attendance, and psychological well-being. They are also less likely to be tardy or absent or to distract their classmates.

Bill Details

AB 1240 will ensure that each school district or county office of education maintaining kindergarten or any of grades 1-12, inclusive, shall provide breakfast for students in accordance with the following:

- Schools in which 40-60 percent of enrolled students are eligible for FRP meals make breakfast available to all students each school day.
- Schools in which 60-80 percent of enrolled students are eligible for FRP meals make breakfast available to all students each school day after instruction has begun.
- Schools in which at least 80 percent of enrolled students are eligible for FRP meals make breakfast available free of charge to all students each school day after instruction has begun.

AB 1240 provides for implementation across a period of three school years starting with 2016-17. This practical change in state law increases access to school breakfast, boosts academic performance, and uses more effectively existing state and federal funds.

¹ California Food Policy Advocates, "School Meal Analysis: 2013-14" (February 24, 2015).

² Ibid.



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Support

California Food Policy Advocates (Sponsor)
Alameda County Community Food Bank
American Academy of Pediatrics
California Action for Healthy Kids
California Association of Food Banks
California Black Health Network, Inc.
California Center for Public Health Advocacy
California Conference of Local Health Department
Nutritionists
California Hunger Action Coalition
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California State PTA
California School-Based Health Alliance
California Teamsters Public Affairs Council
Community Action Partnership of Orange County
Community Food and Justice Coalition
Food Access Coalition
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Hunger Action Los Angeles
Hunger Advocacy Network
Jewish Family Service of San Diego
Locally Delicious, Inc.
Los Angeles Fund for Public Education
National Association of Social Workers – California
Chapter
Partnership for Children and Youth
Roots of Change
San Diego Hunger Coalition
San Francisco Unified School District
Second Harvest Food Bank
SF-Marin Food Bank
Urban & Environmental Policy Institute
Western Center on Law & Poverty
Individual Letters (725)

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