

**CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION PLENARY**  
**SUMMARY OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**  
March 2, 2008

**POLICY PRIORITIES**

**Healthy Eating Initiatives**

- Wellness Policies
  - Grants/ other funding for wellness policy implementation and accountability (incentive = enhanced school meal reimbursement)
  - Needs to be incentive, accountability for implementation (teeth); incentives directed toward lower-income schools with fewer resources.
  - funding for wellness policies at state/local level
  - mandate involvement of nutritionist in implementation of wellness policies
  - require that they address out of school time programs if school district has a certain % of low-income students (e.g. summer food)
  - increase student involvement
- School meal reimbursements – need to be higher for healthier foods – incentives for schools (eg increased reimbursement if they use local produce or other healthy foods); schools need funds for facilities so they can prepare higher-quality (non-microwaved) foods.
- Higher nutrition standards for school meals - improved quality will lead to increased participation and increased reimbursements
- Improve incentives to serve healthier school meals
- Regulate competitive foods; restructure what's available in the school meals and reduce competitive foods;
- Create "nutrition-friendly zones" around schools
- Allow schools to get Cash instead of Commodities
- Transportation to feeding sites/breakfast in rural areas
- County-level/ local-level – partnering with businesses, churches on facilitating distribution of healthy food.
- Gleaning produce – give incentives for farms to open grounds for that (barrier lies in tax deductions for farmers)
- Expand Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Increase access to Farmers' Markets
- Restrictions on food advertising to children
- Corporate accountability of food companies (lessons from tobacco campaign?)
- Farm to School Policies
  - local farmers and food banks excess capacity to bring foods in NY
  - link farmers to school districts (transportation costs and financial risks)
  - educate community and build partnerships with local non-profits
  - "local preferences" in school food procurement defined differently by state/county
  - Seed Grant for building infrastructure (e.g. school kitchens)
  - school gardens – grant for start-up

- Nutrition Education
  - Creative nutrition education models
  - Integrate nutrition education into Core Curriculum
  - Cooking education for people to learn how to use fresh produce
  - Additional training funds for Child Nutrition staff
  - school nutrition coursework – “food as medicine”, child healthy education through USDA

### **Out of School Time**

- Lower 50% threshold to 40%
- Universal meals
- Make eligibility standards (CACFP) more reasonable
- Increase education/awareness of Food Pyramid policy – for example market in the “kids world”
- Federal funds for Back Pack Program; expand contents of backpack to include family meal
- Connect \$ to goal of connecting policy to community
- Summer Food
  - Expand program to include year-round holidays (school holidays)
  - Loosen prohibition against taking food off-site
  - 40% area eligibility
  - streamline programs – merge CACFP and SFSP – “community nutrition program”
  - Funding for transportation - based on % rural population
- Afterschool
  - Eliminate the Reduced-price category
  - Create on-site consumption waiver for program’s requirement
  - Expand supper program
  - Mechanism to provide at-risk supper if site serves needy children in less than 50% F/RP areas (like closed SFSP sites?)
  - Ease paperwork burden for afterschool sponsors
  - Qualification through school data
  - Increase reimbursement rates
  - Provide federal alternate guidelines for state’s CACFP at-risk licensing rules (some state licensing rules severely reduce site participation)

### **Early Childhood**

- CACFP
  - Eliminate tiered reimbursement for family-based
  - Eliminate reduced price category
  - Use area eligibility for center-based
  - Increase administrative rate
  - Simplify integrity of regulations – more focus from USDA on nutrition
  - Get rid of block claiming 5 day reconciliation
  - Quality food requires increased reimbursement
  - Increased reimbursement rates, especially for infants
  - Reimburse all providers (regardless of income) for their own children
  - Improve quality of meal pattern (FL meal pattern)
  - Milk 2 times a day – not necessarily breakfast and lunch
  - Make meal pattern more consistent with WIC (eg soy milk)
  - Increase number of reimbursable meals to 4 due to length of child care day
  - Maintain food-based vs. nutrient based meal plan – Head Start meal pattern as model?
  - More collaboration and outreach – no more stepchild to school meals
  - Increase funds for nutrition education (esp. for day care homes)
  - Increased outreach to low-literacy community

- Increase funding for state agency to improve oversight, training, technical assistance and outreach
- Increase funding for providers for training to improve integrity and services, especially for hard to serve (ie informal care)
- WIC
  - New WIC food package - community participation, grocery store capacity, education capacity
  - Increase program up to kindergarten
  - Add yogurt
  - \$ assistance for WIC vendors to implement new food package
  - greater flexibility for WIC vouchers at Farmers' Markets

### **School Meals**

- Incentives for universal meals (50% free or reduced)
- Universal meals by area eligibility – census data
- Eliminate reduced price category
- Reduce stigma by assuring invisibility of method of student payment in school meals
- Improve direct certification process – eliminate letter method – all electronic data matching
- Increase time allotted for lunch
- Link students on free and reduced price meals to Food Stamps, partnering with other agencies to link to all federal nutrition programs
- NCLB as a way of reinforcing importance of school meals and wellness policies
- Promote the use of Food Stamp nutrition funding for school programs
- Breakfast
  - Make breakfast part of the school day
  - More long-term studies connecting breakfast to health, economy, etc
  - Increase reimbursement levels for all programs – indexing, by local cost of living
  - Higher reimbursement for breakfast served in the classroom
  - Grants for start-up of classroom breakfast
  - Make connection between CNR and NCLB – make classroom breakfast time part of education time
  - Address charter school breakfast participation
  - Matching federal funds if state funds breakfast
  - Create sustainable models (ie get breakfast rates up and benefit from economies of scale)

## **Grassroots Engagement**

- Tell stories of people who use services – impact on them - and those who are not being served and why that is a problem.
- More education and talk about connections among poverty, hunger, obesity – accurate info that poor people are not overweight because they eat too much food
- More foundation support for anti-hunger advocacy
- Simple, specific and consistent messaging
- Direct communication with legislators
- State and community coalitions
- Expand Farm Bill network
- Develop list serve
- Get children involved in legislative process and adults who used child nutrition programs
- Essays by children
- Creation of local/regional nutrition/hunger councils of providers and advocates to coordinate efforts
- Hold local forums to engage and educate community organizations and advocates
- on-line chats with a target subject (eg Child nutrition, nutrition/behavior)
- state to state regional conference call
- organizations from state sending letters with specific data to state leaders
- build good relationship with governors' offices
- school board involvement
- FNS forums – like Farm Bill listening sessions
- Invite members of Congress to summer food kickoff events
- Invite members of Congress to all child nutrition programs
- Find ways to have elected officials eat reimbursable meals
- Find some kind of "challenge" for child nutrition
- Visualize or creatively present possible impact of change to 40% area eligibility – provide template for state advocates
- Food bank testimonials about increased need in summer to support increase in SFSP program
- Look at "the Mobility Agenda" – use positive values frame
- Newsletters/Updates
- Forming and maintaining relationships – one-on-one connection with political representatives
- 2 tier approach – policy makers and career staff
- evidence-based research on benefits of the programs
- outreach to encourage clients to participate in networking and advocacy
- community events with media
- find key partners outside of the traditional arena (education, business, health)
- educate traditional partners and encourage them to mobilize
- Sound fiscal investment – prevention – public health
- Federal hearings on CN issues
- Work with Media