



END HUNGER CONNECTICUT!

102 Hungerford Street, Hartford, CT 06106 * PHONE: 860 560-2100 * FAX: 860 560-2108 * www.endhungerct.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, December 7, 2006**

**Contact: Sally Mancini-860 560-2100
ext 17
Cell phone-860-209-0122**

Connecticut Ranks Last in the Nation for Participation in the School Breakfast Program for the Second Year in a Row

Hartford, CT– State and national reports released today on the federal School Breakfast Program reveal significant room for program expansion in Connecticut. According to the Food Research and Action Center's national *School Breakfast Scorecard 2006*, only 55.5 percent of Connecticut schools that offer school lunch also offer school breakfast, ranking Connecticut last in the nation out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. On a brighter note, End Hunger Connecticut!'s *Connecticut School Breakfast Report Card 2006* did find a 3% increase in Connecticut town participation over the 2003-04 school year but this small increase was not enough to pull Connecticut out of the last place ranking.

"It is very disappointing to see Connecticut, once again, come in last place. However, it's important to recognize that more kids are getting a breakfast at school, and that communities do have the ability to grow their School Breakfast Programs." said Lucy Nolan, Executive Director of End Hunger Connecticut!, the statewide anti-hunger advocacy organization which released the reports today.

The federal School Breakfast Program began as a pilot program in 1966 as a way to make sure children were able to start the school day ready to learn. Numerous studies have found that breakfast in the morning improves children's school achievement and health.

-MORE-

“School Breakfast brings something to the table for everyone” continued Nolan, “children are assured a daily meal while teachers benefit with students that are more focused and prepared to learn. Even parents can rest easy knowing their children are fed nutritiously balanced meals each school day.”

Norwich, one of the Connecticut towns with the highest school breakfast participation rates was recognized by End Hunger Connecticut! today at a breakfast event at Teachers’ Middle School. “Reaching a lot more children with breakfast in schools is probably the cheapest and fastest way to improve children’s learning and health, improve attendance and, of course, reduce hunger,” said Jim Weill, president of the Food Research and Action Center. “It’s essential that more schools serve breakfast, adopt steps like breakfast in the classroom and reach out to more children.” If Connecticut schools increased school breakfast participation by serving 60 out of 100 low-income children eating lunch, they would help 36,154 more children and gain an additional \$7,575,481 in federal funding.

“We need to do something in Connecticut. Our report gives schools and communities the tools to feed more kids – so they can move ahead in life with the proper fuel to be ready to learn and be healthy.” said Nolan. *Connecticut’s School Breakfast Report Card 2006* gives state and local officials an opportunity to evaluate how well towns are doing in providing school breakfast to low-income students and provides guidance for increasing Connecticut participation.

###

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is a leading national organization working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and undernutrition in the United States. End Hunger Connecticut! (EHC!), is a statewide anti-hunger and food security organization. With a focus on advocacy, outreach, education and research, EHC! serves as a resource for community organizations, legislators, and low-income families on food and nutrition issues.

The *Connecticut School Breakfast Report Card 2006* is available at www.endhungerct.org.

The *School Breakfast Scorecard 2006* is available at www.frac.org.