

Universal School Meals PA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***** MEDIA ADVISORY *****

Kids, Parents, School Nutritionists Rally for No-Cost School Lunch

Pennsylvania currently provides no-cost school breakfast to all K-12 students, but not lunch, despite widespread support and data showing value in enhanced learning, improved childhood health.

HARRISBURG (May 6, 2024) – Students and their parents, along with representatives from anti-hunger groups, child nutrition programs, school leadership organizations, childhood health and education groups, will hold a news conference at **1:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 8 in the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg** to urge lawmakers and the administration to expand the state’s existing no-cost school breakfast program for K-12 students to include lunch.

The issue of food insecurity among students is a pressing concern nationwide. Many students struggle to access nutritious meals, which can impact their health, well-being, and academic performance. By advocating for free lunches in schools, the group is calling attention to the importance of ensuring equal access to nutritious meals for all students, so they have the nourishment they need to thrive.

WHAT: Support No-Cost School Lunch Programs in FY 2024-25 Budget

WHEN: 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 8, 2024
(with b-roll opportunities from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., as noted below)

WHERE: Main Rotunda, Harrisburg, Pa.

WHO: **Ryan Sundberg**, Second Grade, Chadds Ford Elementary

Nicole Melia, Food Service Supervisor; Great Valley School District in Malvern, Chester County; Public Policy and Legislative Chair, School Nutrition Association of PA (SNAPA)

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D-Allegheny)

Sen. Lindsey M. Williams (D-Allegheny)

Dani Ruhf, Founder & CEO, Child Hunger Outreach Partners (CHOP Out Hunger), which stocks food pantries in schools and packs backpacks for kids to take home.

Nichole Hockenberry, Executive Director, PA Beef Council

George Matysik, Executive Director, Share Food Program

Kinkead and Williams have jointly introduced the “[No Student Should Go Hungry Universal School Meals](#)” legislation in the House ([H.B. 2829](#)) and Senate ([S.B. 1327](#)).

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ATTN. EDITORS: Prior to the news conference, **from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**, the students, parents, and advocates will host a legislative lunch-and-learn for lawmakers and others in **Room 60 East Wing** next to the Capitol Cafeteria. The food items — fresh fruit, a fresh veggie cup with hummus, a beef stick, a cheese stick, pretzels, and milk — represent actual components served during school lunch, with locally sourced products. **The luncheon is open for b-roll, and students and representatives will be available for interviews.**

For more information, visit www.universalschoolmealspa.com.

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