

To: All Interested Parties

Re: **PA Poll shows Overwhelming, Broad-Based Support for Expanding Free, No-Cost Lunches to K-12 Students;**

Nearly 7 in 10 Voters “More Likely” to Vote for a State Lawmaker who Supports Expanding Free, No Cost Breakfast to Include Lunch(es)

THE ALLIANCE TO END HUNGER/TUSK PHILANTHROPIES’ SOLVING HUNGER

Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc., today releases its latest **Pennsylvania** Statewide Voter Attitude Survey on behalf of **The Alliance to End Hunger and Tusk Philanthropies’ Solving Hunger**, testing attitudes and opinions towards expansion of Pennsylvania’s free breakfast program for K through 12 students to include free, no-cost lunch(es).

The poll is a random sample of 800 Pennsylvania registered/likely voters, weighted to state Census data and balanced by geographic region, age, political party affiliation and other factors. Conducted November 15-26, 2023, using live telephone agents, the poll includes interviews with N=800 voters and has a margin of error of +/-3.4% at the 95% confidence level. An oversample of Republicans was also conducted bringing the GOP cohort up to N=562 (with a +/-4.1% margin of error).

The key findings of the poll include the following:

Eight in Ten Pa Voters Support Expanding Free, No-Cost Breakfast to Include Lunch for K Through 12 Students

By a margin of 83:14, a bipartisan, broad-based cross-section of Pennsylvania likely voters supports expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch for K through 12 grade students. Support is broad-based and bipartisan and includes strong majorities of voters in all key subgroups. This includes:

- 86% of registered Democrats, 78% of Republicans and 82% of non-affiliated self-identified Independent voters
- 88% of Democrat likely primary voters and 78% of Republican likely primary voters
- 84% of Biden voters and 82% of Trump voters
- 81% of self-identified conservatives, 83% of moderates and 84% of liberal/progressive voters
- 84% of voters who plan to vote “Republican” for their local state lawmaker who represents them in Harrisburg, and 83% of voters who plan to vote “Democrat” for their local lawmaker.
- 80% of critical “swing” voters, who say they split their tickets in most elections
- 95% of voters who currently have kids in grades K through 12, including 82% who do not
- Strong majorities of voters in all geographic regions of the Commonwealth, including Northwest (75%), Southwest (85%), conservative Central/“T” (81%), Northeast (86%), Southcentral (82%), Southeast/Philadelphia collar counties (81%), plus Allegheny County/Pittsburgh and Philadelphia (85% each).
- 85% of urban voters, 81% of those living in suburbs and 87% in rural areas of the Commonwealth.

Voters Give Overwhelming Support to Arguments in Favor of Expanding Free, No-Cost Breakfast to Include Lunch

In a fair and balanced matrix of questions, voters were presented with arguments both for and against expansion of the program to include free, no-cost breakfast and lunch for all public-school students. Results show that strong majorities of voters are “*more likely*” to support the program after being told about the program’s benefits and advantages. For instance, consider the following:

- 88% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told one out of every eight (8) kids goes hungry in Pennsylvania, and as many as one in five in rural communities experience hunger.
- 84% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told that local farmers could provide more food for schools and local communities if the program is expanded.
- 83% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told that many students shy away from reduced-priced meals due to shame or the “stigma” associated with the program.
- 84% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told that expansion of the program would cost less than one percent of the state budget.
- 81% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told that nearly 1 in 4 of food insecure children in Pennsylvania do not currently qualify for free or reduced-priced meals. Including these kids means more than 325,000 children will no longer go hungry.
- 80% are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch when told that expanding the program means families would save hundreds of dollars a year in a time of heightened inflation and rising grocery prices for families.

Other noteworthy poll findings include:

- After learning more about some of the arguments against expansion of [the] program to include free/no-cost lunch, voters continue to support expansion of the program by an 83:13 margin, showing no drop off from earlier in the poll when asked initially.
 - Sixty-eight (68) percent of likely voters say they would be “*more likely*” to vote for a state lawmaker in Harrisburg who supports expanding the program to include both free/no-cost breakfast and lunch for all public-school children. This includes a broad-based coalition of voters in key cohorts of the population, including:
 - 70% of Democrats, 66% of Republicans and 66% of self-identified Independents
 - 73% of Democrat likely primary voters, and 66% of Republican likely primary voters
 - 63% of critical “swing” voters, who say they split their tickets in most elections
 - 69% of both Trump and Biden voters
 - 71% of voters who plan to vote “Republican” for their local state lawmaker who represents them in Harrisburg, and 67% of voters who plan to vote “Democrat” for their local lawmaker.
 - When poll respondents are told that 15 million kids in 8 states current enjoy universal school meals, 81% of likely voters say Pennsylvania should be added to the list of states that expands free, no-cost meals to include both breakfast and lunch to all public-school children.
 - 87% of likely voters support expanding access to the state’s WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program so thousands of additional Pennsylvania mothers and young children can afford healthy food.
 - 72% of likely voters say they would be “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-cost breakfast to include lunch if told that Gov. Shapiro [hypothetically speaking] supports the plan.
 - 68% of Pennsylvania likely voters say they are “*more likely*” to support expanding free/no-costs breakfast to include lunch if told that many Republican lawmakers [hypothetically speaking] support the plan.
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