

**GCFS Policy Sub-Committee, April 3, 2018
Improvements to Child Nutrition Programs
Food and Nutrition Department (FND)**



Action Item #3: Discuss progress and identify next steps regarding recommendations from *Freedom from Hunger: An Achievable Goal for the United States of America*

Update on: Child Nutrition relative to the recommendations for the [Freedom from Hunger](#) Report: Make Targeted Improvements to Child Nutrition Programs

- **Improve access to summer feeding programs and congregate meals by reconsidering requirements for rural areas.** Rationale: Children living in rural areas may have limited access to summer nutrition programs due to remote living conditions and lack of transportation. Action Item: Congress should change the congregate feeding requirements based on a community’s stated need and local context to allow them to substitute or supplement with different, more accessible approaches. This includes areas of high need in rural areas where congregate feeding can be a barrier to feeding as many children as possible.
 - **NDA UPDATE: As this is a requirement of the federal SFSP, this change must be made at a federal level. Congress did not reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act of 2010.**

- **Change area eligibility for reimbursement of summer feeding from 50% of children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals to 40% to help reach children in rural and suburban areas.** Rationale: The summer feeding program uses an area eligibility test to determine whether to provide reimbursements for snacks and meals. This test defines a “low-income area” as one where more than 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. It is particularly hard for rural and suburban areas to meet this 50% requirement, because poverty is less concentrated in these areas. That keeps many communities with significant numbers of low-income children, but not a high enough concentration of poverty, from participating. In addition, the 50% test is inconsistent with federally funded summer programs, such as the 21st Century Community Learning Center programs and Title I Education funding, which require only 40% school meal participation. Action Item: Congress should change the area eligibility criteria for participation in summer feeding programs from 50% to 40% of children participating in free or reduced priced school meals.
 - **NDA UPDATE: As this percentage is a federal requirement, this change must be made at a federal level. Congress did not reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act of 2010.**

Make the summer electronic benefit transfer option available by creating a mechanism that allows communities to apply for it if they can clearly demonstrate a barrier to congregate feeding related to remoteness, climate, or safety. Rationale: Despite a high prevalence of children at risk for hunger in some communities, participation in summer feeding programs can

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be very low. This may indicate that the need is not as serious as thought in some areas, but in others, may reflect chronic underservice due to transportation barriers related to remote living conditions, severe weather patterns, or parental concerns regarding community violence. These barriers can occur in both rural and urban settings. USDA pilot studies have shown that participation in an electronic benefit transfer option can reduce hunger among families with children by more than 30%. This is significant evidence of a targeted child nutrition program improvement. Action Items: a. Congress should allow the USDA to offer summer electronic benefit transfer in communities that are especially at risk for hunger among children and where participation in summer feeding sites is restricted or minimized by remoteness, safety, or

- climate. The electronic benefit transfer option should be offered in areas (census tracts or school attendance zones) without the consistent presence of summer meals sites in an effort to minimize the duplicate use of summer electronic benefit transfer and congregate sites. b. The USDA should work with communities at risk to create an administrative mechanism through which funds can be provided directly to families with eligible at-risk children through an existing electronic benefit transfer mechanism.
 - **NDA UPDATE: Nevada WIC can provide an update regarding past USDA funding received for the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children grant.**
 - **DHHS manages this grant - See more information on this at:**
<http://nevadawic.org/ebt/summer-electronic-benefit-transfer/>
- **Streamline and simplify administrative processes among the child nutrition programs.** Rationale: Currently, the various child nutrition programs have different application processes, even though the same organizations and sponsors frequently administer these programs. Having to complete separate applications and comply with differing or conflicting regulations places undue administrative burdens on the community-based programs that run these programs. Currently, community-based organizations operate the Child and Adult Care Food Program's At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program and the Summer Food Service Program separately, even though they are serving the same children, often at the same sites, throughout the year. This approach not only burdens community organizations, but also incurs unnecessary USDA costs to review and respond to multiple applications from the same providers under complex regulations. Action Items: a. Congress should allow the USDA to streamline and consolidate the application processes, funding mechanisms, and regulations for the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program's At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program into one program for community-based sponsors. b. Congress should allow the USDA to permit school food authorities, with a single application, to provide and administer the School Breakfast Program, the National School Lunch Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program's At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program under National School Lunch Program regulations.

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- **NDA UPDATE: At this time, both CACFP and SFSP continue to be administered as separate programs with separate requirements. However, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued the following memoranda regarding streamlining applications and program administration.**
 - **Streamlining At-Risk Meal Participation of School Food Authorities, November 28, 2012**
 - **Transitioning from the Summer Food Service Program to the Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk Afterschool Meals, May 31, 2013**
 - **Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns, October 1, 2017**
 - **Offer Versus Serve and Family Style Meals in the CACFP, December 9, 2016**
 - **Taking Food Components Offsite in the At-Risk Afterschool Components of the CACFP, April 6, 2017**