



**Feeding Bodies. Fueling Minds.™**

The Minnesota School Nutrition Association (MSNA) is deeply committed to the nutritional health and well-being of children and recognizes the importance of healthy food for growth and student achievement.

Minnesota's School Nutrition programs served over 99 million meals last year to the 850,000 public school students in Minnesota. Improving state financial support for school lunch and breakfast helps improve the quality of food and keeps prices manageable for paying families.

MSNA Priorities for 2019 include -

**In partnership with Second Harvest Heartland - expand opportunities for students to have breakfast after the bell**, which includes breakfast in the classroom or grab and go options as students enter the school for the start of their regular school day. These programs:

- Increase student participation and break down barriers for children to be able to eat a nutritional item before their learning day begins
- Improve academic achievement, student health and attendance rates

*State funding to expand breakfast after the bell offerings should prioritize schools that are required to have a breakfast program under Minnesota law and do not have more than a 62.5% free and reduced-eligible student population that is directly certified under the USDA Community Eligibility Provision*

**Ensure the state's free Kindergarten breakfast program is covering the full cost of food and labor:**

- The state should periodically review the local costs associated with providing free breakfast to Kindergartners who would otherwise be required to pay

**Increase School Lunch Reimbursement by 5 cents, to 17.5 cents per lunch:**

- Minnesota's last increase in state reimbursement for lunches occurred in 2013 when the reimbursement increased from 12 cents to 12.5 cents.
- School nutrition programs face significant financial challenges. The cost of food together with increased regulations and the cost of compliance make it increasingly difficult to produce school lunch via student payments and current federal and state funding.
- Increased state support helps maintain affordable prices for families and high quality nutrition for students.

**Promote Respectful Treatment in the Cafeteria**

- Clear and transparent school policies ensure parents and students understand their obligations for receiving school meals.
- Professional development of staff ensures that students are treated respectfully when their meal balances are low or negative.
- Oppose taking a served meal away from a student.

**To support Farm to School efforts, provide funding through the Agricultural Growth, Research and Innovation (AGRI) program to help local producers bring their products to institutional markets, like schools.**

- School nutrition programs purchase locally grown agricultural products as a matter of good nutrition and business practice.
- Local education opportunities support students learning about nutrition, food, and agriculture in and out of the classroom.

**Support a state appropriation into the Good Food Access Fund**

- Assist communities with access to quality food.