

# Senate Bill 348

## Healthy Meals for Kids

### Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) & Co-Authors

#### THIS BILL

Senate Bill 348 will help ensure that California's new universal meal program provides our students healthy, nutritious meals by enacting the new federal school nutrition standards aimed at reducing sugars, salt and fat and increasing whole grains in school meals. Additionally, SB 348 will require the state to define an adequate time to eat school meals and maximize newly available federal funds to help prevent childhood hunger during the summer.

#### ISSUE

In 2021, California became the first state in the nation to establish a universal meal program providing every public school pupil the right not only to a free education, but also to two nutritious meals each school day, free of charge. This proposal was initially proposed in Senate Bill 364 and then passed in the Budget Act of 2021.

Additional investments in the 22-23 Budget increased the ability of schools to purchase locally and sustainably grown food and to prepare fresh, rather than pre-packaged, meals.

Nutritional science has long established that children who eat meals at school have improved nutrition and health outcomes. This is especially true for children who experience high rates of food insecurity. By building off of the standards in the National School Lunch Program, and adding additional support for the quality of the meals served, California has acted to ensure that our children improve their nutritional health.

However, our current standards do not go far enough to protect children's health because they lack limits on added sugar. Health professionals maintain that school-age children should have less than 26 grams of added sugar per day. On [Feb 3, 2023, the USDA proposed updates](#) to school meal guidelines to reduce sugar and sodium intake. SB 348 compliments these new proposed guidelines.

A diet high in sugar increases the risk of many health problems including tooth decay, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. High sugar

intake among children is also associated with poor behavioral outcomes and reduced memory capacity

Serving freshly grown & prepared healthy school meals is increasingly attainable not only because of new funding for scratch-cooking in schools but also because the food industry has responded to extensive calls for healthy options by producing healthier food.

This bill will increase the likelihood that the two daily meals California's public school students have access to are the healthiest meal that we can offer. What's more, SB 348 will help reduce childhood hunger when school is out of session by maximizing federally funded child nutrition benefits.

#### SOLUTION

SB 348 will improve the health of children by:

- Reducing sugar and salt in school meals.
- Requiring schools to give children adequate time to eat a school meal.
- Allowing for more food to be served to older children when needed.
- Maximizing & expanding upon new federal summer childhood nutrition programs.

#### SUPPORT

50 Acterra Action for a Healthy Planet  
Alchemist CDC  
Agricultural Institute of Marin  
Alameda County Community Food Bank  
Allensworth Progressive Association  
Alliance of San Diego  
American Academy of Pediatrics, CA Chapter  
American Diabetes Association  
**American Heart Association (Sponsor)**  
Anisha I Patel, MD, MSPH, MSHS  
Buen Vecino  
California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)  
California Alternative Payment Association  
**California Association of Food Banks (Sponsor)**  
California Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics  
California Chapter of American College of Cardiology

California Dental Association  
California Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO  
California Food and Farming Network  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
California Medical Association  
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation  
Californians for Pesticide Reform  
Center for Food Safety  
Ceres Community Project  
Changelab Solutions  
Chef Ann Foundaiton  
Common Sense Media  
Community Action Partnership of Orange County  
Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County  
Community Health Councils  
Cultiva La Salud  
**Dolores Huerta Foundation (Sponsor)**  
Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation  
**Eat REAL (Sponsor)**  
Ecology Center  
Faith Action for All  
Farm2Poeple  
Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano  
Food Bank of Santa Barbara  
FoodCorps  
Food for the People, the Food Bank of Humboldt County  
Food in Need of Distribution  
Food Share  
Friends Committee on Legislation in California  
**Gasol Foundation (Sponsor)**  
Glide  
Good Samaritan Family Resource Center  
Golden State Opportunity  
**Grace Institute – End Child Poverty California (Sponsor)**  
Hunger Action Los Angeles  
Innecity Struggle  
Jakara Movement  
Kaiser Permanente  
Kitchen Table Advisors  
LA Care Health Plan  
Los Angeles Food Policy Council  
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank  
Marin Food Policy Council  
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter

National Council of Jewish Women  
Nextgen California  
**No Kid Hungry (Sponsor)**  
**Office of Kat Taylor (Sponsor)**  
Open Heart Kitchen  
Para Los Ninos  
Parent Voices California  
Pesticide Action Network of North America  
Public Health Advocates  
Public Health Institutes Center for Wellness and Nutrition  
Richards Grassfed Beef  
Redwood Food Bank & Family Services  
Roots of Change  
Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services  
Sacramento Food Policy Council  
San Diego Food Bank  
San Diego Hunger Coalition  
Santa Clara County School Boards Association  
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank  
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors  
San Mateo Food System Alliance  
Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County  
Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County  
Second Harvest of Silicon Valley  
Second Harvest of the Greater Valley  
Share our Strength  
SLO Food Bank  
SPUR  
SSG/API Forward Movement  
**State Superintendent of Public Instruction**  
**Tony Thurmond (Sponsor)**  
Stemple Creek Ranch  
TCC Family Health  
The Praxis Project  
Tomkat Ranch  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Vecinos Uniodos Arvin  
Vecinos Uniodos Bakersfield  
Vecinos Uniodos California City  
Vecinos Uniodos Lamont  
Vecinos Uniodos Lindsay  
Vecinos Uniodos Parlier  
Vecinos Uniodos Sanger  
Vecinos Uniodos Woodlake  
Women’s Foundation of California

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