



# Oregon is expanding access to school meals

*Oregon is expanding access to school breakfast and lunch through 3 key policies that were passed within the Student Success Act. These changes take effect for the 2020-21 school year, making Oregon the nation's leader in access to school meals.*

## WHY ARE SCHOOL MEALS IMPORTANT?

### Increasing access to school meals leads to...

- **Student Success.** Students who eat school breakfast attend more days of school, show improvements in test scores, graduate at higher rates, and earn more as adults<sup>1</sup>.
- **Better health.** Students who eat school meals are more likely to have proper nutrient intake, improved mental health, and fewer visits to the school nurse<sup>2</sup>.
- **Less stigma.** When all students eat school meals, it evens the playing field.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OREGON STUDENTS?

1. **Schools in low-income areas will provide Breakfast After the Bell to all students.** Breakfast After the Bell allows students to eat after the traditional school day starts, whether that be in the classroom or extra time between class periods. This change means more students eat breakfast, which is linked to higher attendance and graduation rates, and higher incomes later in life.
2. **More schools will provide free school meals to all students** through the Community Eligibility Provision. Oregon created a state fund to help schools in low-income areas provide free meals to all students. Now, more than half of all Oregon students could eat school meals without worrying about paying, filling out applications or feeling singled out.

# \$41.6 million

## in additional annual funding for nutritious school meals

3. **More students qualify for free meals** due to higher income eligibility guidelines. Schools that require school meal applications will now offer free meals to students whose families earn up to 300% of the federal poverty line. Previously, 37% of Oregon students<sup>3</sup>

who faced food insecurity were not eligible for free meals; now, more of those students can get the meals they need.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

As school professionals, families, and other advocates we must ensure that as many students as possible have access to school meals and that we address racial inequities. You can get involved by:

**Contacting your school.** As schools prepare to make these changes in their cafeteria they need feedback and support from the community. Feeding students in a way that works for everyone is a group effort. Ask how you can help.

**Staying updated and spreading the word.** Families need to know about these changes so they can ensure their children have full access to meals at school. Visit [oregonhunger.org](http://oregonhunger.org) for updates.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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<sup>1</sup> Deloitte Development LLC. (2013). *Ending childhood hunger: A social impact analysis*. Retrieved from <http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/download-resource/Ending%20Childhood%20Hunger%3A%20A%20Social%20Impact%20Analysis.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Food Research and Action Center. (2016). *Research Brief: Breakfast for Health*. Retrieved from <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfastforhealth-1.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Feeding America. (2017). *Child Food Insecurity in Oregon*. Retrieved from <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/child/oregon>