

SUBJECT: Endorse Nutritionally Balanced, Low-Cost or Free Meals for Children in Schools

SUBMITTED BY: Pennsylvania Osteopathic Family Physicians Society on behalf of
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REFERRED TO: 2021 American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP)
Congress of Delegates

RESOLUTION NO: 18

- 1 WHEREAS, obesity rates in the United States for children aged 2–19 have increased from 7% to 18%¹ over the
2 last five decades², and 1 in 6 American children live in food insecure households and may not regularly receive
3 sufficient nutrient intake;³ and
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- 5 WHEREAS, Americans consistently do not meet federal dietary recommendations, and current dietary quality
6 in children and adolescents remains below optimal;⁴ and
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- 8 WHEREAS, the increase in obesity is directly linked to the increased consumption of processed, starchy and
9 high-sucrose foods—all of which are the most inexpensive and accessible foods to any demographic
10 nationwide;⁵ and
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- 12 WHEREAS, research has shown that American families classified as the working poor and their children living
13 in disadvantaged neighborhoods experience the greatest increase in obesity and unhealthy lifestyle;⁵ and
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- 15 WHEREAS, nutritionally balanced dietary changes, such as those outlined at www.choosemyplate.gov, in
16 childhood lead to proper growth and development and have been shown to reduce disease in adulthood;⁶ and
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- 18 WHEREAS, school lunch programs are a means of both increasing food accessibility and reducing food
19 insecurity, and with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), these lunches have the potential to
20 deliver nutritional necessities focused on an increase in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, as well as a
21 decrease in processed foods high in trans-fats and sodium;⁷ and
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- 23 WHEREAS, data shows that children served school lunches that comply with HHFKA standards are not only
24 eating healthier, but also continue to choose healthier foods—mostly fruits and vegetables—for meals and
25 snacks long term;⁷ and
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- 27 WHEREAS, federally assisted meal programs, such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), are
28 associated with reduced obesity by offering a more balanced diet, including vitamins and minerals. Children in
29 low-income areas consume more than half of their daily fruits and vegetables within the school menu;¹² and
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- 31 WHEREAS, monetary spending for quality childhood education and socioeconomic support has been shown to
32 provide significant effects in long-term economic benefits and can function as effective cost saving measures;¹³
33 and
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- 35 WHEREAS, the Tenets of Osteopathic Medicine, as approved by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA),
36 emphasize the person is a unit of body, mind and spirit, and osteopathic medical education teaches nutrition is
37 an integral part of maintaining vital functions and a core principle of preventive care;¹⁴ and
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39 WHEREAS, the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) has historically taken a strong
40 position advocating development and funding programs that increase access to nutritious food options in all
41 communities.¹⁵ACOFP supports the concept of nutrition as an essential aspect of disease prevention and
42 health improvement;¹⁶ now, therefore be it
43
44 RESOLVED, that the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) advocate for legislative
45 efforts in support of widely accessible, nutritionally-balanced, low-cost or free meals for all children in the US
46 Pre-K through 12 schools; and be it further
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48 RESOLVED, that the ACOFP forward this resolution to the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) House of
49 Delegates for consideration.

FINAL ACTION: APPROVED as of March 10, 2021

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