

School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin: School nutrition professionals applaud Department of Public Instruction budget request

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The School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin (SNA-WI) applauds State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Evers for fully funding the School Breakfast Program in the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) 2019-2021 budget.

Administered by DPI, the School Breakfast Program is a federal and state assisted meal program for public and private schools that impacts students across Wisconsin every day.

"The School Breakfast Program is critical to the development and well-being of Wisconsin students," said SNA-WI President, Mike Gasper. "Research shows students who eat breakfast attend more days of school, perform better on math tests and are more likely to graduate. Many students consume at least half of their daily calories at school, and for some students, school meals might be the only food they regularly eat."

“Fully funding this program not only holds the state accountable to existing state law, but it also helps alleviate additional financial stress of school districts and their food service budgets,” said SNA-WI Legislative Committee Chair, Caitlin Harrison. “Most importantly, school breakfast helps fight hunger, promote healthy eating habits and allow students to reach their full potential.”

As a result of current funding, Wisconsin schools receive approximately 8-cents per breakfast despite the fact state law calls for a 15-cent per meal reimbursement rate. The combination of a flat state appropriation and continued growth in the School Breakfast Program has resulted in lower reimbursement rates each year for participating schools.

State funding for the School Breakfast Program has remained flat since 2012 even as demand continues to grow. During the 2016-2017 school year, 1,978 schools participated in the School Breakfast Program. On average, more than 179,000 students participated every day and more than 31.7 million breakfasts were served.

The School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin represents nearly 1,170 school nutrition professionals statewide who provide high-quality, low-cost meals to Wisconsin students. As a non-profit professional organization, our members are committed to developing the full potential of all children through quality nutrition.