

# Let's close the school meals gap.



New York has made historic investments to expand school meals, but approximately **280,000 NY kids still don't have access to free school meals.**

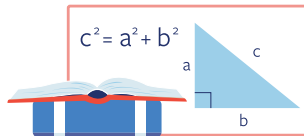
In her FY2026 Executive Budget, Governor Hochul included funding to expand universal free school meals statewide. The Legislature has championed this critical investment for the past two years, and now must ensure it is fully funded in the final budget.

Providing Healthy School Meals for All will benefit students and families across the state. Nearly **600 schools** will be newly able to provide free school meals for all, expanding access for more than **280,000 additional students.**

Free school meals **alleviate hunger, reduce stigma, support mental and physical health, eliminate paperwork barriers,** and:



**Save families \$165/month per child in food costs**

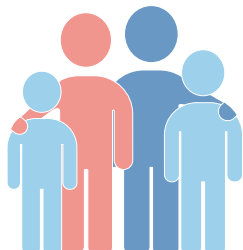


**Improve math and reading test scores**



**Build capacity for Farm to School**

In the communities that remain without access to universal free school meals, there are significant gaps between the cost of living and eligibility for free school meals:



**A Long Island family of four needs \$92,000 to meet basic needs, but the cutoff for free school meals is \$58,000.**

**87% of surveyed New York parents** agree that all students, no matter their income, should have access to free meals at school.

It's time to take the next step:

**Fully Fund Healthy School Meals for All New York Kids.**



**SchoolMealsForAllNY.org**

This policy proposal is endorsed by a diverse coalition of more than 300 anti-hunger, education, food, nutrition, health, and equity-focused organizations and associations. See the full list at: [SchoolMealsForAllNY.org/hsmfa-supporters](https://SchoolMealsForAllNY.org/hsmfa-supporters)

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