



March 19, 2015

Senator Santiago
California State Capitol, Room 5119
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 292 (Santiago) School Lunches: Adequate Time to Eat
AAP-CA POSITION: SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Santiago,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing the 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of all four California AAP regional chapters statewide (Ch 1 –Northern California, Ch 2 – Greater Los Angeles, Ch 3 – San Diego, and Ch 4 – Orange County), strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 292 (Santiago). The California Legislature has already established the requirement that schools provide students with nutritious school lunches. However, legislative action is needed to ensure that students have enough time to eat the meals provided during a lunch period. AB 292 would take steps to ensure that California school children have a minimum of twenty minutes to eat lunch after being served.

California school children lack the sufficient time to eat lunch because of long lines combined with the required time for eating and outdoor play. For the 60 percent of California public school children participating in free or reduced lunch programs, the lunchtime meal is a critically important source of food. Although food insecurity is harmful to any individual, it is devastating to children due to their unique physical and development needs. 90 percent of infants and toddlers in food insecure households are likely to be in fair or poor health conditions and 30 percent are more likely to be hospitalized. Child hunger is also associated with behavioral and psychological conditions and diminished academic achievement in reading and math.

AB 292 supports providing time for the essential lunch meal to all children in California schools and ensures children are highly productive and ready to learn.

Pediatricians strongly support AB 292 and thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of children across California.

Sincerely,

Kris E. Calvin |

Kris Calvin
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatrics, California