
April 22, 2021

The Honorable Adrin Nazarian
State Capitol P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0046

RE: AB-996 (Nazarian) School breakfast and morning snacks: nonschoolaged children
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Nazarian,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 996, as introduced on February 18, 2021, which would require the California Department of Education (CDE) to issue instructions for how school districts could serve younger siblings a federally-reimbursable meal at a school site that their older siblings attend.

Hunger among children is known to have significant short and long-term repercussions. In the short-term, a child experiencing hunger is less likely to be able to focus in school, to avert school disciplinary action, or to participate in extra-curricular activities. In the long-term, childhood hunger increases the likelihood that the child will experience developmental delays, cognitive deficiencies, and adult auto-immune diseases that are both costly and painful.

The CDE administers the Federal School Breakfast Program, which serves pupils enrolled in school a federally reimbursed breakfast for free or at a very reduced-price. Many elementary school students who are eligible for a free or reduced-price meal have younger siblings at home who are also suffering with food insecurity and could benefit from a free breakfast or morning snack. Although there are federal programs serving young children, securing locations where these federally funded meals for young children can be served can be surprisingly difficult.

There is no federal prohibition to serving younger siblings of school-age children a morning snack through the Child and Adult Care Food Program at the same time and location that school-aged children receive their federally reimbursed school breakfasts. However, because there are specific rules for each program, having guidance from the CDE on how to co-locate program delivery will support schools that wish to implement a Breakfast for Toddlers Program.

AB 996 will address the hunger needs of younger children who are not yet of school-age to ensure that they are fed the most important meal of the day. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 996. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Jacques Corriveau, M.D. FAAP
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership