



Public Schools of North Carolina

# School Nutrition Programs in NC:

Supporting students' health, well-being,  
academic and future success



***We think nutrition  
because  
students can't think  
without it!***

Dr. Lynn Harvey, RDN, LDN, FAND, SNS  
Director, School Nutrition and District Operations

# NCDPI administers these Federally-assisted programs:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Summer Nutrition Programs
- After School Snack Program
- Special Milk Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- School Nutrition Leadership Academy
- School Nutrition Purchasing Alliance



**NC has the 7<sup>th</sup> largest School Nutrition Program in the country.**



# Our goal...

- To serve and support local school administrative units in providing nutritious, appealing, affordable, easily accessible meals for all students as part of the instructional day;
- In an environment that preserves students' self-esteem while promoting their health, well-being, academic and future success; and
- In a manner that instills innovation, accountability, transparency and overall program integrity.



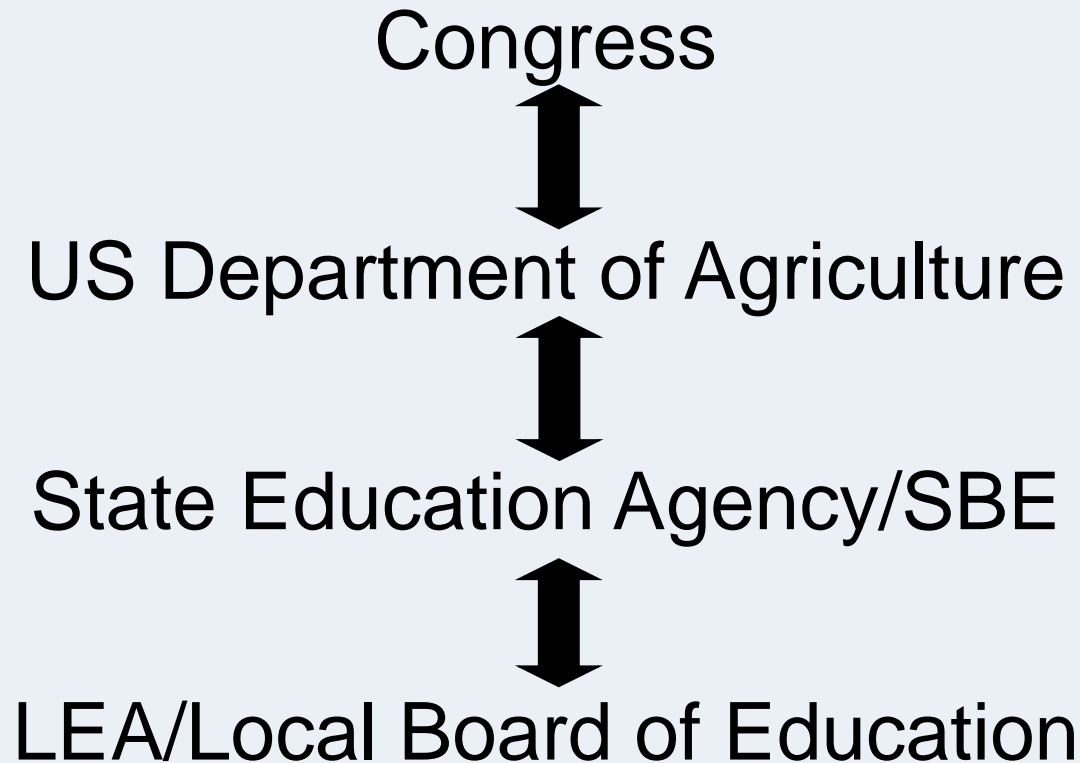
# School Nutrition Programs

- ✓ Are entitlement programs
- ✓ Are Congressionally authorized
  - national security
  - health/well-being
  - local economies
  - educational achievement



*School Nutrition “programs are intended to be a partnership among Federal, State and local governments.”*

# School Meals: Federal, State and Local Collaborators



# Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010\*

## Guiding Principles of Reauthorization

- ✓ Increased nutritional integrity
- ✓ Enhanced school nutrition environment
- ✓ Increased accountability for Federal funds
- ✓ Increased access to school meals



**\*54 New Provisions in the Law**



# HHFKA requirements

- New Meal Pattern/dietary standards
- Performance-based reimbursement
- Meal Price Equity
- Meal Charge Policies
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)



# School Nutrition Programs are intended for ALL students

Student eligibility for free or reduced price meal assistance is based on:

1. **Household application** - indicating household size and income; signed by the Head of Household
2. **Direct Certification\*** - children are certified for free meals based on their households receiving assistance under the SNAP, Cash Assistance (formerly TANF) or FDPIR
3. **Categorical Eligibility\*** – homeless, runaway, migrant, foster, and Head Start students (and their siblings) are “automatically eligible” for free school meals

\*Based on documentation provided by a third party.





# Student Eligibility/Benefits

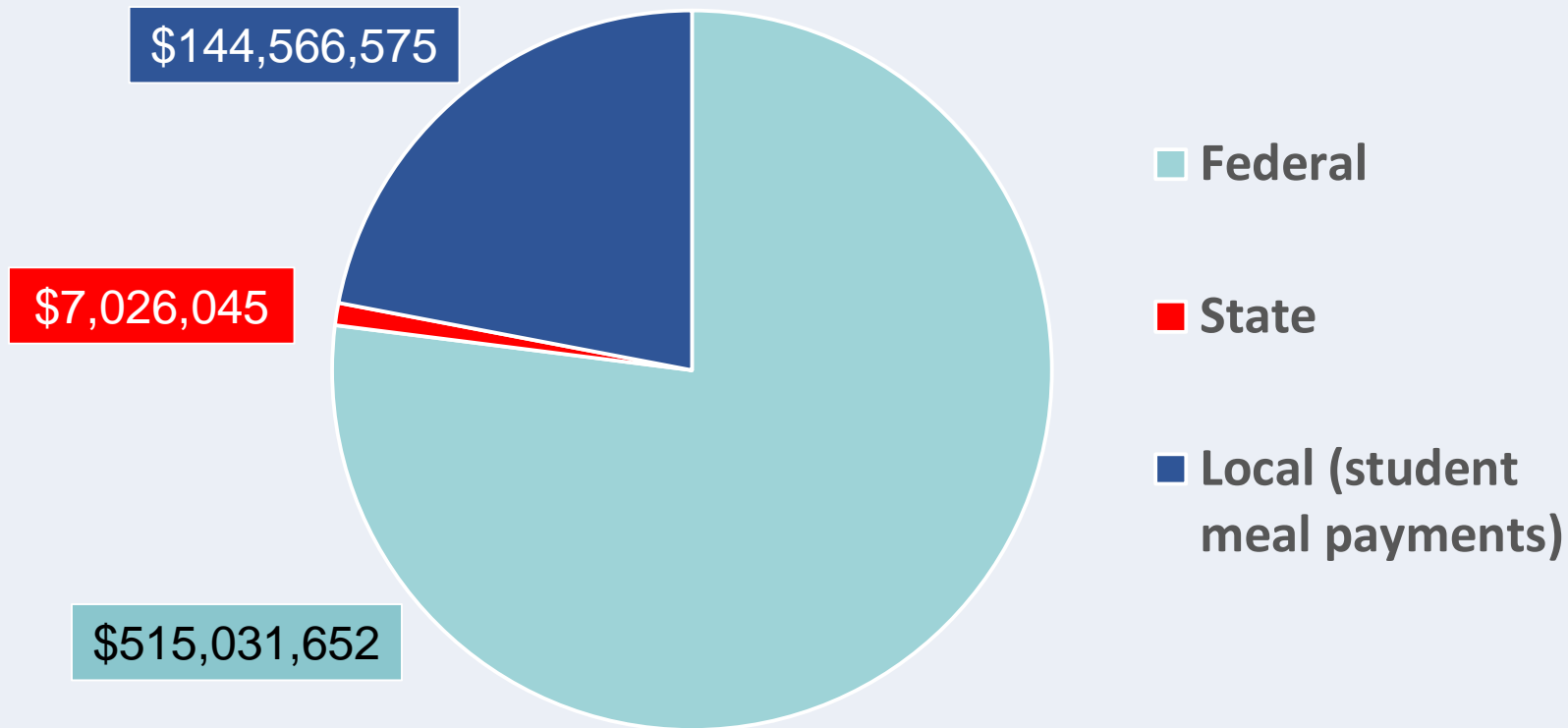
| Eligibility   | Qualifications             | Meal Benefit*   |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Free Meals<br>(application, DC or CE)   | 130% of poverty and below  | \$2.20 (breakfast)<br>\$3.50 (lunch)                          |
| Reduced-Price Meals<br>(\$ .30 student co-pay for breakfast)<br>(\$ .40 student co-pay for lunch) | 131% - 185% of poverty     | \$1.90 (breakfast)<br>\$3.10 (lunch)                          |
| Paid Meals  | 186% of poverty or greater | \$0.31 (breakfast)<br>\$0.41 (lunch)<br><br>*Severe need rate |

- 60% of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals
- Average cost to produce a student lunch in NC is \$3.80
- Average cost of a Student Paid Meal in NC is \$2.60



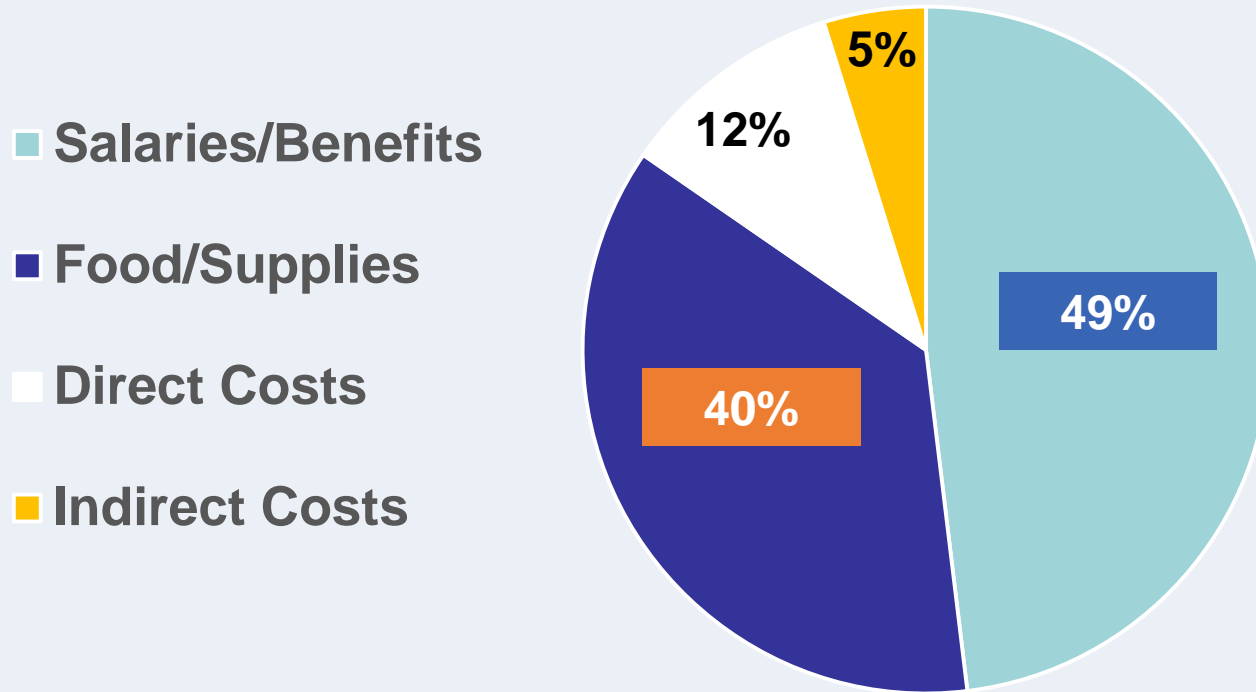
# Funding for School Nutrition Programs

## Funding Sources



# Expenses in the School Nutrition Programs

## Expenses by Category



# Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

CEP is a universal meal plan under the **NSLP** that permits eligible districts and schools to provide meals to all students at no charge to the student regardless of economic status.

## Participating Schools/Districts:

- ✓ Required to provide breakfast and lunch
- ✓ Prohibited from collecting household applications
- ✓ Required to establish an ***Identified Student Percentage (ISP)*** based on April 1 data
- ✓ Must claim reimbursement based on  $ISP \times USDA \text{ factor}$
- ✓ Must cover any additional costs from non-Federal funds



# Identified Student Percentage (ISP)\*

Percent of students Directly Certified and Categorically Eligible for Free meal benefits.

Examples: Three NC Schools

1,000 ADM with 400 DC + 300 CE = 70% ISP

1,000 ADM with 250 DC + 275 CE = 52.5% ISP

1,000 ADM with 150 DC + 250 CE = 40% ISP

**\*NOTE: The ISP is NOT the SAME as the percentage of students eligible for F/RP meals.**



# CEP and Reimbursement

## ISP and the USDA Multiplier Effect (1.6)



### School A

500 meals =

**\$1,750.00**

1,000 ADM

400 students Directly Certified

300 students Categorically Eligible

700

$700 / 1,000 =$  ISP of .70 or 70%

$.70 \times 1.6$  (USDA Factor) = 112%

ALL meals reimbursed at the **FREE**  
rate of \$3.50

# CEP and Reimbursement - ISP and the USDA Multiplier Effect (1.6)



## School B

500 meals =  
**\$1,502.80**

1,000 ADM

250 students Directly Certified

270 students Categorically Eligible

525

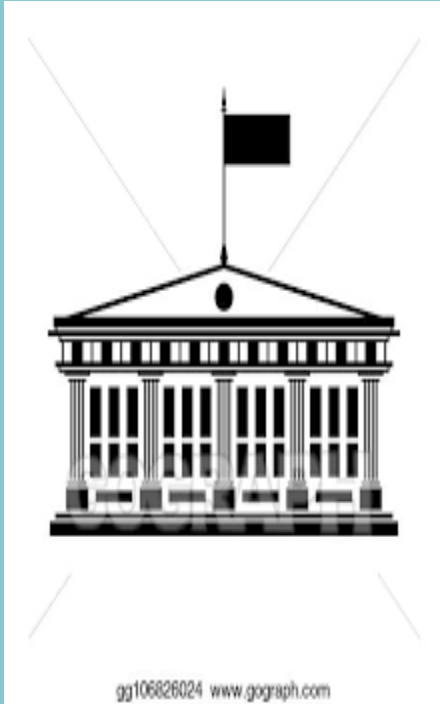
$525 / 1,000 = \text{ISP of } .525 \text{ or } 52.5\%$

$.525 \times 1.6 \text{ (USDA Factor)} = .84 \text{ or } 84\%$

**84%** of meals reimbursed at the **FREE** rate  
of \$3.50 =  $(420 \times \$3.50 = \$1,470)$

**16%** of meals reimbursed at the **PAID** rate  
of \$0.41 =  $(80 \times \$ .41 = \$32.80)$

# CEP and Reimbursement - ISP and the USDA Multiplier Effect (1.6)



1,000 ADM

150 students Directly Certified

250 students Categorically Eligible

400

$400 / 1,000 = \text{ISP of } .40 \text{ or } 40\%$

$.40 \times 1.6 \text{ (USDA Factor)} = .64 \text{ or } 64\%$

**64%** of meals reimbursed at the **FREE**  
rate of \$3.50 =  $(320 \times \$3.50 = \$1,120)$

**36%** of meals reimbursed at the **PAID**  
rate of \$0.41 =  $(180 \times \$0.41 = \$73.80)$

## School C

500 meals =

**\$1,193.80**

**An ISP of 62.5% is the “break even” point for the CEP.**



# School/District Participation in the CEP

|                   | District-wide |            | Partial   |            | Total      |            |
|-------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| School Year       | Districts     | Schools    | Districts | Schools    | Districts  | Schools    |
| <b>SY 19 – 20</b> | <b>57</b>     | <b>299</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>648</b> | <b>104</b> | <b>947</b> |
| <b>SY 18 – 19</b> | <b>51</b>     | <b>266</b> | <b>52</b> | <b>616</b> | <b>102</b> | <b>882</b> |
| <b>SY 17 – 18</b> | <b>52</b>     | <b>258</b> | <b>50</b> | <b>654</b> | <b>102</b> | <b>912</b> |
| <b>SY 16 – 17</b> | <b>50</b>     | <b>284</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>544</b> | <b>97</b>  | <b>828</b> |
| <b>SY 15 – 16</b> | <b>48</b>     | <b>216</b> | <b>45</b> | <b>526</b> | <b>83</b>  | <b>742</b> |
| <b>SY14 – 15</b>  | <b>32</b>     | <b>208</b> | <b>36</b> | <b>444</b> | <b>68</b>  | <b>652</b> |



# Continued concern for students of “economically distressed” households

- Households with incomes between 186% - 225% of poverty.
- Students do not qualify for meal benefits.
- Students often may not have meal money to pay the Paid meal price of \$2.60 (avg.) per meal.
- Students may have no alternative but to charge meals or be denied meals, depending upon the LEA’s meal charge policy.



# Student Participation

| Fiscal Year | Breakfast | Lunch  |
|-------------|-----------|--------|
| 2014 - 2015 | 31.24%    | 60.48% |
| 2015 - 2016 | 30.80%    | 59.37% |
| 2016 - 2017 | 31.07%    | 57.59% |
| 2017 - 2018 | 31.64%    | 57.69% |
| 2018 - 2019 | 30.24%    | 56.24% |



# Child Hunger in North Carolina



- Nearly 60% of students (826,000) enrolled in NC's public schools qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
- Approximately one in five or 22.4% of the nation's children live in food insecure households.
- More than one in four or 27.6% of children in North Carolina struggle with hunger.
- Many students struggle with hunger because they live in economically-distressed households, yet they do not qualify for meal benefits at school.



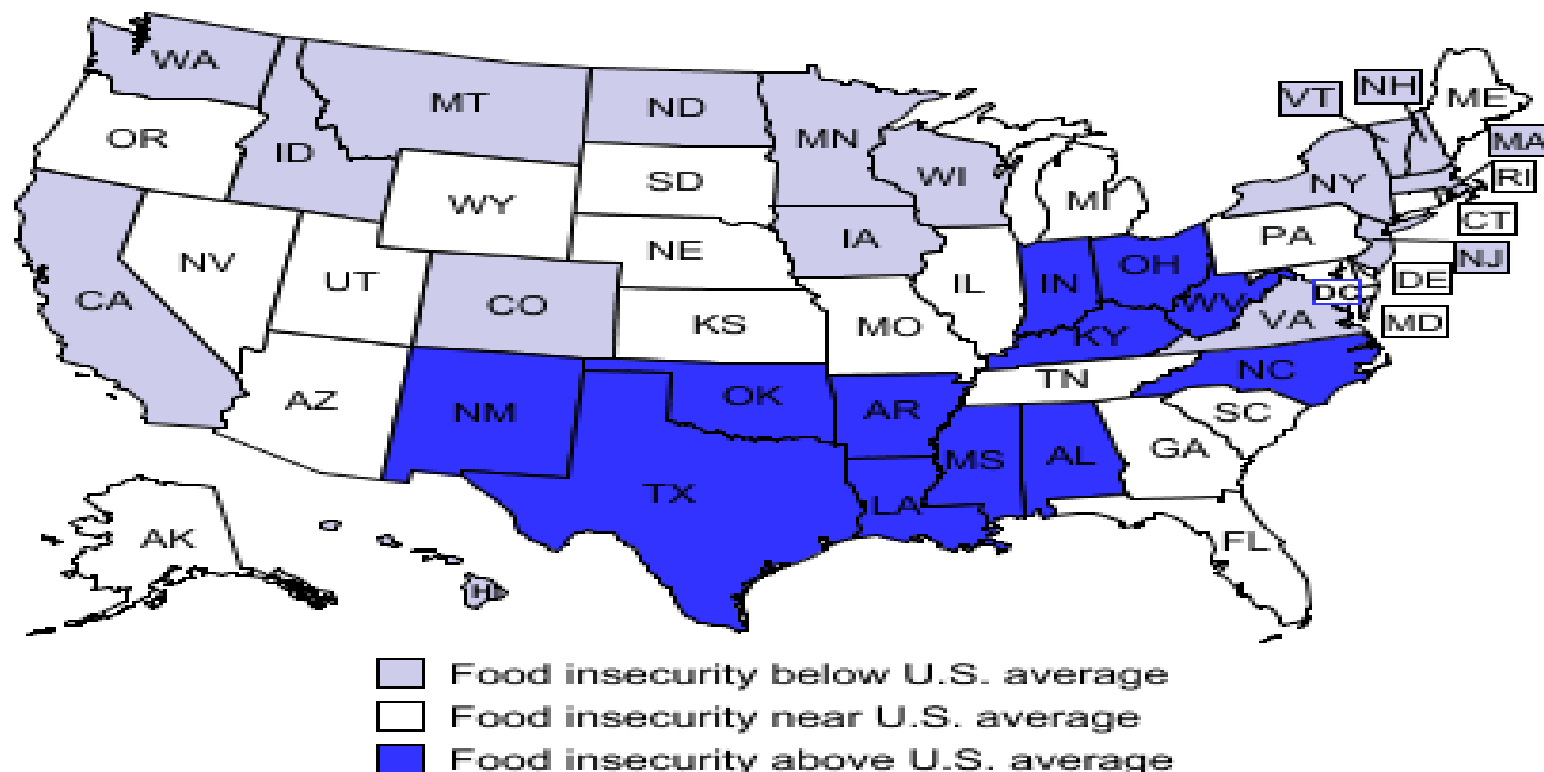


# Available versus Accessible



# Child Hunger and Food Insecurity

**Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2016-18**



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, using data from the December 2016, 2017, and 2018 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.

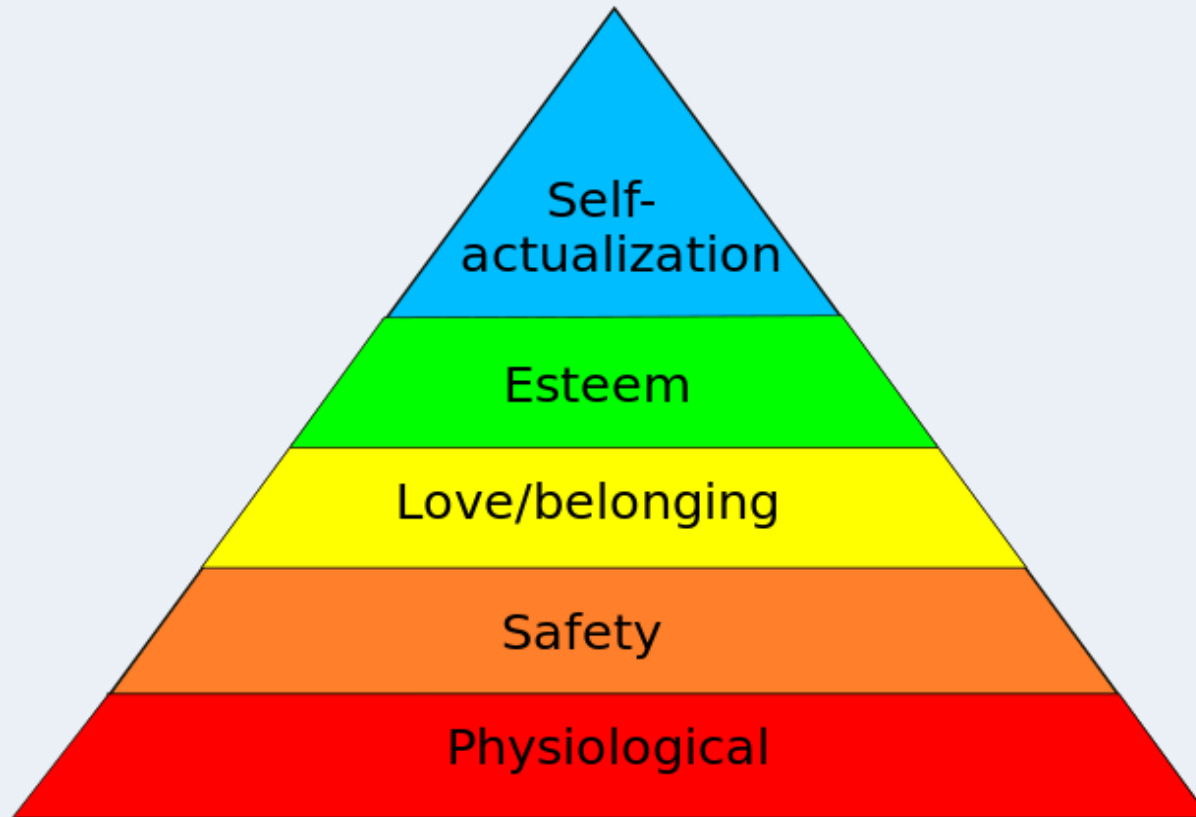
# Academically, students who experience food insecurity and hunger are more likely to:

- have reduced cognition or brain function
- have limited attention spans
- have difficulty concentrating and performing complex tasks
- have more behavioral problems
- have lower standardized test scores
- have to repeat a grade



*Hunger has long lasting, devastating effects on the health, social and emotional well-being and academic success of students.*

# Provided Testimony, Leandro Case, 2015



A Conceptual Framework to Establish the Critical Nature of School Nutrition Programs in Supporting a Sound Basic Education for All Students





More than ever, School Nutrition Programs are an important part of the instructional day; they are critical safety nets for students because meals/snacks provide fuel and nutrients needed to concentrate, learn and succeed.

