


CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#17-2023

DATE: June 10, 2024
TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members
FROM: Heather Geyer, City Manager 
SUBJECT: CR-110 – US Conference of Mayors Support for Summer Meals Program

PURPOSE

To consider CR-110, a resolution supporting the US Conference of Mayors Summer Meals Program. This item is being brought forward at Mayor Meredith Leighty's request in an effort to end childhood hunger.

BACKGROUND

The Mayors Alliance is a nonpartisan cohort of national mayoral champions for ending child hunger. The Alliance's work harnesses the collective voice of mayors to drive change at the state and national levels. The Mayors Alliance invitation is open to all mayors in the United States. Leighty has already signed onto this effort, joining Colorado mayors from Golden, Lakewood, Edgewater, Thornton, Boulder, and Loveland. Overall, 391 mayors have joined the Alliance.

The Alliance Pledge is:

I want to become a member of the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger. I believe that no child in America should go hungry. As Mayor, I pledge to work to end childhood hunger by engaging with community leaders to utilize innovative ideas and approaches to ensure equitable access to food for all of our city's children and to improve utilization of important existing programs such as afterschool and summer meals.

Additional information on the Mayors Alliance campaign can be found at mayorshungeralliance.org. City Council has actively lobbied State and Federal officials for their continued support of programs to improve access to school breakfast, after-school meals, summer meal programs and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The City of Northglenn has supported work to end childhood hunger by engaging with Food for Hope, a nonprofit organization that provides weekend food bags to elementary school students, snacks through the school fuel program, and in-school food banks.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

There are no time or financial implications.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of CR-110.

STAFF REFERENCE

If Council Members have any questions, please contact Heather Geyer, City Manager, at hgeyer@northglenn.org or 303.450.8706.

ATTACHMENTS

1. End Childhood Hunger: An Action List
2. Summer Meals In Your Community Engagement Toolkit for Mayors



End Childhood Hunger: An Action List

Your leadership is crucial to a successful anti-hunger campaign. With the engagement of state and local leaders, the federal nutrition programs can run more effectively and efficiently, reaching more kids with the food they need to grow up healthy and strong. You can help set policy priorities, activate resources, champion legislation, and use your office to bring together the right stakeholders to advance proven solutions.

Across all programs

- Commit to local efforts in the spirit of the [National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#)
- Support efforts to pass equitable and inclusive policies that will improve access to SNAP, school meals, out-of-school meals, Summer EBT, and WIC
- Advocate for the resources to administer each program to increase program participation efficiently
- Use your platform to celebrate the champions feeding kids through the child nutrition programs.
- Establish a Children's Cabinet or convene a Task Force on Childhood Hunger with local state leaders and nonprofit organizations to establish a plan of action with public goals
- Raise awareness by speaking publicly about the issue of childhood hunger, using social media to promote programs and program sites to constituents, and talking to school administrators and staff about how child hunger impacts their students.

SNAP

- Support exercising state options and other flexibilities, including federal waivers, which expand access and streamline administration
- Partner with state, county, and local SNAP agencies to improve outreach and technical assistance, highlighting how SNAP participation is directly linked to other nutrition programs.
- Thoughtfully and strategically engage with your community, especially those with lived expertise, to address equity issues and other concerns in the local administration of the program.

School meals

- Provide financial support and encouragement for school meals programs to adopt effective service models like Breakfast After the Bell.
- Encourage eligible schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to enable access to no-cost school meals for all students

Out-of-school meals

- Increase after-school and summer meal participation by promoting PSAs and hotlines to help families find sites
- Convene stakeholders for collaborative planning to facilitate effective service models and maximize reach

Summer EBT

- Promote the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children (Summer EBT or SUN Bucks) and work with your state to provide clear information to eligible families about how to participate
- Advocate for adequate state administrative match funding in the state budget to support a streamlined, user-centered program

WIC

- Encourage federal action to fully fund WIC
- Support efforts to ensure that eligible mothers and young children have access to WIC



SUMMER MEALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY – ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT FOR MAYORS

It's a stark reality that children face heightened risks of hunger, obesity, and learning loss during the summer months. This is a pressing issue that demands your attention. Thankfully, summer nutrition programs exist to combat these challenges. The need for nourishing meals doesn't cease with the school day or the onset of summer. Shockingly, less than 14% of children from low-income households benefit from a summer meal. This is where mayors can play a crucial role in ensuring that children have access to summer meals.

What is the Summer Meals Program?

Federal summer nutrition programs are funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by a designated agency in each state. Most program providers choose to serve meals using the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which is available to schools and qualifying non-profit organizations. However, schools can also choose to serve summer meals through the National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Option (SSO).

The Summer Meals program was designed to reach kids with the nutrition they need over summer vacation, but has historically only reached a fraction of the kids who need it - In fact, 6 out of 7 kids who may have needed summer meals have historically missed out. That's because major barriers stand in the way, particularly in rural communities, where families face many barriers when accessing summer meals, including lack of transportation, fuel costs, work schedules, and extreme weather.

In 2022, Congress enacted significant improvements to how we reach kids with food they need during the summer, including a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program, beginning in the summer of 2024, to provide eligible families with a \$40 grocery benefit per child per month, and a nationwide non-congregate option for summer meals programs in rural areas without traditional congregate sites to allow meals to be taken home or delivered directly to children.

In the Summer of 2024, dozens of states, U.S. territories, and Tribes have opted into the Summer EBT program, a game-changer for ending child hunger. This summer, it's expected to help the families of nearly 21 million kids stretch their grocery budget and provide nutritious meals at home while kids are out of school. [The full list of participating states is available here.](#)

Summer Meals Resources

- [Summer Meals Fact Sheet](#)
- [USDA Summer EBT Outreach Toolkit](#)
- [Non-Congregate Summer Meals](#)

Ways to Engage

One of the major barriers to children participating in Summer Meals is the knowledge of the program's existence. By shedding light on the importance of summer nutrition, mayors can raise awareness about the Summer Meals programs in their communities. There are several strategic ways that Mayors can help raise awareness:

1) Issue a Summer Meals Proclamation

Use this [Summer Meals proclamation template](#) to declare the availability and importance of Summer Meals in your community. By magnifying the importance of ending summer hunger, your community will increase awareness of Summer EBT, amplify the availability of Summer Meals in your community, and reinforce ending childhood hunger as a priority for your administration. *Be sure to amplify the message by promoting the proclamation through local media and social media!*

2) Pave the Way for Summer Meals Sites in Your Community

In many towns and cities, summer meals sponsors must be granted access to public facilities like community centers and parks. Make this approval process seamless so meal sites can open up quickly where children gather, learn, and play.

3) Promote the No Kid Hungry Summer Meals Texting Hotline and Meal Finder

Text "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to 304-304 or visit [here](#) (English) or [here](#) (Spanish) to find their nearest meal site. Check out No Kid Hungry's [Summer Meals Outreach Toolkit](#) to download sample graphics, flyers, and social media language for easy outreach and promotion. Leverage existing communications channels, including your city's website, 311 or 211 call centers, and newsletters, and include a reminder after city press conferences or community meetings.



Visit a Summer Meals Site!

Experience the program in action by visiting a Summer Meals site while also leveraging media interest to raise awareness in your community. During a site visit, you can:

- Engage with children, parents, and families. *Try taking a turn serving meals!*
- Listen and learn about the experiences of Summer Meals providers.
- Invite and host reporters to publish a story about Summer Meals. *Be sure to share ways how children can access meals in their neighborhoods!*
- Build relationships with community members.

Kick it up a notch!

Consider sponsoring a Summer Meals kick-off or spike-event. These high energy events are a great way to increase awareness and boost participation. Kick-off events are best held in June and spike events are mid-summer to help reinvigorate participation in Summer Meals.

For questions, contact:

Aaron Goldstein, Senior Manager, Local Government Relations at agoldstein@strength.org

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR LEIGHTY

COUNCIL MEMBER'S RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO.

No. CR-110
Series of 2024

Series of 2024

A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING SUPPORT FOR SUMMER MEAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

WHEREAS, summer is the hungriest time of year for many children when families struggle to make up for lost school meals and food insecurity tends to increase;

WHEREAS, 53 percent of school-aged kids – 30 million in total – qualify for free or reduced-price school meals but do not get these meals when school is out for the summer;

WHEREAS, children who are food insecure are more likely to miss school, perform worse academically, experience social, emotional, and mental health challenges, forego healthcare, and develop chronic disease;

WHEREAS, the National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option and the Summer Food Service Program, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by state agencies, play a vital role in helping children from low-income and food-insecure households get the nutrition they need during the summer months;

WHEREAS, pre-pandemic data show traditional summer meal programs generally never reach more than 1 in 7 kids who rely on free or reduced-price meals during the school year;

WHEREAS, the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (Summer EBT) and Non-Congregate Summer Meals are proven, effective interventions that reduce food insecurity during the summer months and their implementation is a historic opportunity to reduce summer hunger;

WHEREAS, Summer EBT, which is available to states nationwide in 2024, complements summer meal programs by providing \$120 per child, per summer in grocery-buying benefits to families with children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and likewise alleviates food insecurity and improves child nutrition;

WHEREAS, S-EBT is projected to reach nearly 21 million children and provide \$2.5 billion in grocery benefits in states implementing it this summer;

WHEREAS, more than 30 million children across America could benefit from S-EBT if the program were fully implemented in all 50 states;

WHEREAS, since 2023, rural non-congregate meal service has allowed programs in certain rural areas to distribute grab-and-go or delivered meals to kids outside of the typically required group settings and permitted summer meals to be eaten off-site;

WHEREAS, non-congregate meal service helps close the summer hunger gap in rural areas, which have disproportionate rates of food insecurity, more limited resources compared to more populated areas, and unique access and transportation barriers;

WHEREAS, more than 8 million children living in rural areas across the country could benefit from non-congregate summer meals, but many of those children live in areas not currently served by a non-congregate site; and

WHEREAS, expanding non-congregate summer meal service to children and families in urban and suburban communities would promote equitable access to nutritious meals for millions of children, better meet families' diverse needs, and further reduce summer food insecurity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTHGLENN, COLORADO, THAT:

Section 1. The City Council recognizes that every child deserves access to nutritious meals during the summer months, and children should not be denied resources because of their household's economic status or zip code.

Section 2. The City Council desires an "all of the above" approach to closing the summer hunger gap, including traditional summer meals, Summer EBT, and non-congregate meal service, and encourages Congress to boost state participation in Summer EBT by eliminating the requirement that states pay 50 percent of the administrative costs of the program.

Section 3. The City Council encourages states that have opted into Summer EBT to effectively implement S-EBT so they can distribute benefits to all qualifying children and encourages states not participating in 2024 to adopt and implement the program in 2025 and beyond.

Section 4. The City Council encourages Congress to expand access to non-congregate summer meals by extending eligibility to urban and suburban areas and encourages states to implement expansive non-congregate service to maximize the number of kids reached and meals served.

DATED at Northglenn, Colorado, this _____ day of _____, 2024.

MEREDITH LEIGHTY
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHANNA SMALL, MMC
City Clerk

COREY Y. HOFFMANN
City Attorney