1 in 6 Oregon children don’t have enough food to eat. Every child deserves an equal opportunity to succeed in school, yet as many as 1 in 6 children in Oregon doesn’t have enough food to eat. Right now, the child poverty rate is skyrocketing as pandemic supports were cut, and the cost of food is rising faster than wages.

School Meals for All – offering school breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge to families – helps ensure that all children have the nourishment they need to grow and thrive.

We all want to see our children flourish, yet access and quality to school meals varies widely across districts and schools, leaving many Oregon kids hungry and unable to meet their full potential.

The Changing Landscape:

- Last year, 55% of Oregon schools provided school meals to all students through the Community Eligibility Program (CEP)
- This year, that increased to 71% of Oregon schools thanks to a federal rule change
- Next year, we expect more than 90% of Oregon schools to participate in CEP and provide meals to all students.

Without truly universal school meals, there are too many ways that students can fall through the cracks and go hungry at school.

Help us cross the finish line and create an Oregon where every student has the food they need to learn and grow.
As the number of students eating school meals increases, we also need to safeguard the quality of school meals and support the schools and employees providing them.

In Oregon’s 2025 legislative session, we ask you to:

- Establish school meals for ALL Oregon students and ensure that meals are funded at 100% of the federal reimbursement rate (Oregon’s CEP-Incentive currently sets a maximum combined federal and state reimbursement of just $3.87 per meal.)
- Ensure that increase in school meals continues to include Farm to School products
- Support schools in improving their equipment, where aging cafeterias are not equipped to serve the increased volume of students eating school meals.
- Establish a minimum “time to eat.” Longer lines are leaving some students with less than 5 minutes to eat. Minimum seat time means less food waste, calmer cafeterias, better service, and healthier eating habits.

The Takeaways:

- Support School Meals for All funding
- Support continued Farm to School funding
- Support equipment funding and best practices policy bill

School Meals for All is a coalition of over 30 organizations, as well as students, school and community leaders, teachers and cafeteria workers, parents, food producers, and other advocates. We are working together to identify a policy platform that will secure a values-aligned, universal school meal program for Oregon.

Our Steering Committee:

Contact: david@oregonhunger.org