

Second Reading

Subject: Resolution No. 93-10A1

## **Feeding Every Hungry Child in the San Francisco Unified School District**

- Commissioners Jill Wynns and Rachel Norton

WHEREAS: The San Francisco Board of Education is committed to providing the most nutritious food possible for students in our district as a core strategy of our educational improvement plan, and

WHEREAS: In 2007, the United States Department of Agriculture reported that 12.4 million are children (16.9 percent of all children) lived in households considered to be food insecure, which refers to the lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources, and researchers believe that these numbers are likely to be underestimated, and

WHEREAS: Research on young children in several U.S. cities found that food insecure children were two thirds more likely to experience developmental risks, and to have academic problems, particularly in reading and arithmetic. Conversely, a change from food insecurity to food security can bring concomitant improvements; poor reading performance for food insecure children in the beginning grades was reversed if the household became food secure by third grade, and

WHEREAS: The emotional well-being of hungry children can even be affected in food programs designed to help them. For example, while hungry children can benefit nutritionally from a school lunch program, the school culture in which children joke about the quality of these lunches can prompt other students to "make fun" of poor children who "eat all of their food" in order to stave off hunger at home, and

WHEREAS: Cash shortages in the SFUSD (calculated as the amount of money which should have been collected for meals served to students unqualified for free or reduced meals, but who have no money to pay) have grown from approximately \$385,000 for the whole 04-05 school year, to more than \$1 million last year, and

WHEREAS: When cash shortages rise, cuts must be made to program expenses to cover the cost; and, as labor expenses are fixed, the only solution is to reduce spending on food, which lowers the nutritional quality of the meals served to the students who do qualify for free/reduced meals, as well as to those who don't, and

WHEREAS: Some school districts do not feed children with no qualifying meal application on file and no money to pay; and other districts serve a "meal of shame" such as cold cereal or a cheese sandwich, and

WHEREAS: The Board of Education must improve the financial outlook for the District, including reducing the un-reimbursed costs of the Student Nutrition programs.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That it is the policy of the San Francisco Unified School District that hunger is such an extreme impediment to academic achievement that no child should ever be denied a school meal because of inability to pay, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That because the cost of feeding children who do not qualify for government sponsored meals and have no money to pay for their own meals reduces the amount of money left in the general fund to pay for the academic needs of all students, as well as causing reductions in the quality of food for all students, schools must take the following steps to minimize the financial impact of feeding all children regardless of ability to pay:

1. A meal application must be returned by every family before October 31st; school sites are responsible for getting a 100% return.
2. To accomplish this 100% return, the district will make available to site administrators lists of students with no meal application on file, updated monthly, as well as keeping sites apprised of their respective cash shortages at the same intervals.
3. School sites shall notify parents whenever a student with no meal app comes through the lunch line with no money to pay (the Point of Sale System currently being implemented will make it possible to generate letters to parents.)
4. After three attempts have been made to get the family to return a meal application, there shall be a consequence for the family and for the school (for example, high school students shall not get student IDs, or class schedules, until meal app is returned); elementary school parents will be contacted by learning support specialists to facilitate filling out the form.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED:** That this process will be evaluated and reassessed after the fall semester of the 2009-2010 school year. If cash shortages persist, the following strategies shall be implemented:

- o A limit shall be placed on school's cash shortages, based on the number of students.
- o Schools that exceed the cash shortage limit shall have additional shortages deducted from their Weighted Student Formula allocations for the following school year.
- o Schools compliance with the policy will be included in a report given to the Board of Education as part of its annual review of the Wellness Policy and its effectiveness.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the following practices must be implemented by schools to help underwrite the cost of meals for students who need food and do not qualify for subsidized meals:

1. All adults must pay for school meals they consume (parents, teachers and staff). Federal guidelines do not allow school staff to eat for free.
2. School meals are served only to children enrolled in SFUSD schools, as only these are reimbursed.
3. Schools may not offer seconds to students, as these are not reimbursable.
4. Schools may not allow anyone to take home leftover school meals. This violates federal guidelines and makes efficient management of the nutrition programs impossible.
5. Teachers whose students will not be at school during the lunch period (due to field trip, classroom activity, or whatever) shall notify the cafeteria five days in

advance. This allows the student nutrition worker to adjust the meal orders and eliminate waste; bag lunches are available at no cost for qualified students going on field trips - but must be ordered five days in advance

6. Schools must follow the Wellness Policy regulations concerning competitive sales. No one is allowed to sell food at school outside of school meal programs, at any time during the school day. The only exceptions are the four annual authorized sale days for high schools. Teachers, students or parents may not sell food of any kind, not even at bake sales or "student stores". Violations of this policy may endanger the districts federal and state funding for food programs, undermining our community commitment to ending hunger and leading the efforts to improve nutrition for all of our students, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED:** That the District and the Nutrition Advisory Committee shall continue to work with schools to develop strategies for funding student activities without violating district policy or state and federal laws and regulations regarding student nutrition programs.

*3/10/09*

Please Note:

~ Referred by order of the Chair on 3/10/09 to the Budget and Business Services Committee.

~ Taken up by the Budget and Business Services Committee on 3/17/09. Forwarded to the Board with a positive recommendation by general consent of the Committee.