



AMERICAN SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATION

January 21, 1998

Mr. Bruce Reed  
Director, Domestic Policy Council  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Reed:

Since federal child nutrition programs will be authorized in the coming year, I am writing to urge that the administration support Meals for Achievement and include funding for it in the budget.

Meals for Achievement has been introduced in both the House (H.R. 3086) and the Senate (S. 1396). It would provide a school breakfast at no charge to all elementary children.

The link between breakfast and readiness to learn is well established by research and pilot programs in schools. For example, a study by Dr. Alan Meyers a Boston pediatrician, a study by Harvard University at 3 schools in Philadelphia and Baltimore and pilot programs at six schools in Minnesota all showed that students who eat school breakfast:

- Demonstrate improved classroom performance regardless of socioeconomic status
- Have better attendance and punctuality records
- Display fewer behavior problems
- Visit the school nurse less often

A great deal of effort is being devoted to improving education outcomes for America's children. I urge the President to support and fund Meals for Achievement in the budget as an integral component of his education initiatives.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Griffith, R.D.  
Vice President, ASFS

Summer Food Service Program  
California Sponsor Roundtable

Summer Food Reauthorization:  
Issues and Priorities

A Special Report from the  
California Sponsor Roundtable  
and  
California-Nevada Community Action Association  
December 1997

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## Executive Summary

In 1968 Congress created the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) as a means of continuing the nutritional benefits of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during those months when school was out of session, and school lunches were not available. For the past thirty years, SFSP has fed millions of children who would otherwise have gone without adequate nutrition during the summer months.

The Summer Food Service Program must be re-authorized by Congress periodically, as a component of the Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization. 1998 will be a reauthorization year. Reauthorization presents Congress with the opportunity to review the rules and regulations that govern the Summer Food Service Program, and to make appropriate changes.

During the reauthorization process Congress will also review ideas and suggestions for changes to the child nutrition programs. These suggestions will come from a variety of sources: the USDA, the State agencies that administer the programs, children's advocates, and program sponsors.

In October, 1997, the California-Nevada Community Action Association, in conjunction with the California Sponsor Roundtable, began soliciting ideas for reauthorization. Twenty suggestions for changes to the regulations were compiled in this way.

The task of prioritizing these ideas was accomplished through three regional Sponsor Roundtable meetings held in November, 1997. At each meeting Summer Food Program sponsors debated the pros and cons of each of the ideas in detail. Each Roundtable member was then asked to identify their top three priorities.

The top priorities for change identified by the Roundtable were:

### 1. Flat Rate Reimbursement

A single reimbursement rate should be established that combines administrative and operating costs. This will be the rate paid for all qualified meals served, regardless of actual costs incurred.

### 2. Expand Offer-Versus-Serve

Allow all sponsors the option of using "Offer-Versus-Serve" as in the National School Lunch Program. A meal will be reimbursable if the child accepts three of the five components offered.

### 3. Reduce Site Eligibility Requirements

Reduce the eligibility requirement for "open site" programs from 50% of population below 185% of poverty level to 40%.

#### 4. Streamlined Application for Renewal

For agencies that have previously participated in SFSP or NSLP an abbreviated application process should be established consisting of a letter of intent, a listing of sites, and any changes to the initial application.

#### 5. Restored Reimbursement Rate

Restore cuts to the reimbursement rate contained in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Welfare Reform), adjusted for inflation.

Seven areas identified as secondary priorities for change were:

- Site Visit and Review Requirement Changes
- Eliminating Site Restrictions for Private Non-Profits
- Allowing Food Off-Site
- Increasing Allowance for Second Meals
- Realistic Administrative Costs
- Changes in Training Requirements
- Eliminating Redundant Requirements

This final Roundtable report will be presented to representatives of appropriate State and Federal agencies, members of Congress, and the Office of the President as the official recommendations of the California Sponsor Roundtable.

## Introduction

### Summer Food Service Program

In 1968 Congress created the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) as a means of continuing the nutritional benefits of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during those months when school was out of session, and school lunches were not available.

The program is Federally funded, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), but administered by the individual states. California, like most states, administers SFSP through their Department of Education. Individual program sponsors are community based public or private non-profit agencies, who apply through the Department of Education for reimbursement for eligible meals.

SFSP sites are qualified by the neighborhood income. The most common way to qualify a site is to verify with the nearest school that at least fifty percent of their students qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches. Once the site is qualified, all children in that neighborhood may receive free lunches during the summer, or other off-track periods.

For the past thirty years, SFSP has fed millions of children who would otherwise have gone without adequate nutrition during the summer months. Study after study has shown that when proper nutrition is not maintained during this period, the first month of school is spent simply trying to catch up to where students were when school let out the previous June.

Children who have maintained good nutrition, however, arrive in September ready to learn. Children who are ready and able to learn, in turn, go on to become productive adults. As such, Summer Food and the other child nutrition programs are far more than simply a food distribution program. These programs play a key role in fighting the cycle of poverty and building our nation's future.

### Summer Food Reauthorization

The Summer Food Service Program must be re-authorized by Congress periodically, as a component of the Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization. 1998 will be a reauthorization year.

Reauthorization presents Congress with the opportunity to review the rules and regulations that govern the Summer Food Service Program, and to make appropriate changes. This review process is very valuable, and is a large part of the reasoning behind periodic reauthorization.

During the reauthorization process Congress will also review ideas and suggestions for changes to the child nutrition programs. These suggestions will come from a variety of sources: the USDA, the State agencies that administer the programs, children's advocates, and program sponsors.

This report, by the California Sponsor Roundtable in conjunction with the California-Nevada Community Action Association, puts together the recommendations of SFSP sponsors from throughout the Golden State. The ideas contained within these pages come from the people who have the experience of running SFSP in their communities, those who have gone the extra mile to make sure that children have access to good, nutritious, free meals when school is out of session.

### The California Sponsor Roundtable

The California-Nevada Community Action Association (Cal-Neva) is a private non-profit agency that does year-round outreach, education, and technical assistance on the Summer Food Service Program. In addition to their other activities, which include an annual SFSP conference, Cal-Neva has periodically convened sponsor roundtable meetings to get sponsor input on special problems or projects.

In 1997, with the challenge of Welfare Reform increasing the demand for food programs, the concurrent cutting of SFSP reimbursement rates, and the coming opportunity of program reauthorization, it was determined that a more formal Sponsor Roundtable would be necessary to ensure that the sponsors voices would be a part of any future changes to the program.

Cal-Neva presented the idea to all 276 sponsors within the state. Thirty-six sponsors volunteered to be a part of this new California Sponsor Roundtable. Coming together to create the recommendations contained in this report is seen as only the beginning for the Roundtable.

The California Sponsor Roundtable is now a standing committee of sponsors committed to the future of the Summer Food Service Program. The Roundtable is determined to continue meeting, even after reauthorization, to assist each other and to be a catalyst for change.

### How this report was compiled

In October, 1997, a Reauthorization Survey was sent to the 36 California SFSP Sponsors who had indicated an interest in being part of the Sponsor Roundtable. This survey included four ideas for changes to the program, and asked for comments on these, as well as additional ideas from the sponsor. Through the written input of the surveys, the four ideas became sixteen.

The task of prioritizing these ideas was accomplished through the Roundtable meetings. Three regional meetings were arranged, and invitations sent to the same 36 sponsors. The meetings were held in Sacramento, Garden Grove (Orange County), and Fresno over the first two weeks of November. Ken Goldstein, of the California-Nevada Community Action Association facilitated the meetings.

At each meeting sponsors debated the pros and cons of each of the ideas in detail. The sixteen ideas grew to twenty ideas. Suggestions were combined into like areas as a consensus began to develop within each group. Each roundtable member was then asked to identify their top three priorities. Several roundtable members who were unable to attend the meetings were allowed to submit their priorities by fax.

Each person's top priority was given three points. Second priorities were given two points, and third priorities were given one point. The ranking of priorities in this report is based on these point totals. While child nutrition advocates took part in the roundtable discussions, only program sponsors voted on the priorities.

This report combines the results of each of the three groups priorities with the written comments received from the surveys. It is arranged in three sections. The first section details the five items that emerged as clear priorities for the group. The second section contains items that received votes by some members, but were not top priorities for any. The final section summarizes the other issues raised by the reauthorization survey.

The final report was written by Ken Goldstein, of Cal-Neva, but the voices heard within it are those of the sponsors.

## Top Priorities

### 1 - Flat Rate Reimbursement

**Proposal** - A single reimbursement rate should be established that combines administrative and operating costs. This will be the rate paid for all qualified meals served, regardless of actual costs incurred.

#### Current System:

Under current regulations the reimbursement rate is broken down into two components, Administrative Costs and Operating Costs. The combined rates make up the maximum reimbursement per qualified meal served.

Sponsors track their actual costs in each category (administrative and operating). These figures are compared to the official reimbursement rate and sponsors are then reimbursed for the lower amount (actual vs. rate).

#### Problems:

In practice, actual costs usually exceed the reimbursement rates, and the maximum set rate is paid. Only rarely are the actual costs lower, and therefore paid to the sponsor. The administrative rate in particular is widely acknowledged by sponsors to be about half of what sponsors actually spend.

The two-rate system leads to a lack of flexibility in the sponsors negotiations with food vendors. Sponsors come from all sorts of public and private non-profit agencies - school districts, Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, summer camps, etc. - each with different administrative and operational considerations. Some may have more flexibility when it comes to volunteer versus paid staff. Others may have more flexibility when it comes to food costs. The reimbursement rate should reflect that.

The two-rate system creates more paperwork than necessary to administer SFSP for sponsors. The amount of paperwork sponsors must go through is a common complaint and has led to sponsors leaving the program, and often discourages potential sponsors from entering the program.

Many SFSP sponsors (such as school districts) are involved in other child nutrition programs as well. Most of these other programs utilize the flat rate system, and know first hand how much time it saves. One school district sponsor commented that it takes her twice as long to do the claim for reimbursement for the \$60,000 she receives for SFSP as it takes for the \$600,000 she receives for the school lunch program.

Confusion over what cost category certain items fall into leads to budgeting problems which can delay the start of a summer program. These problems recur again at the end of the summer when claims for reimbursement are returned to the sponsor to have items put into the correct category, further delaying payment.

Summer Food Service Program sponsors are, by definition, non-profit organizations. Any delay in payments caused by purely bureaucratic considerations can seriously impede the organization's ability to perform in other program areas.

#### Advantages to Flat Rate Reimbursement:

- Flexibility - Sponsors who are able to save on operating costs (through self-prep of meals) could hire more staff (an administrative cost). Sponsors who are able to secure volunteers for staff could spend more on food.
- Less Bureaucracy - Filling out the claim for reimbursement can be a complicated process. Many sponsors, even experienced ones, have questions on which cost category some items fall into. Combining the rates will eliminate these questions and speed up the paperwork and reimbursement process.
- Simplified Budgeting - Eliminating questions as to cost categories would free sponsors to realistically project actual overall costs.
- Simplified Claims - "Meals times rate" would speed up filling out the claim for reimbursement, and receipt of the payment. Sponsors would still have to maintain proper accounting of actual costs for auditing purposes.
- Conformity with other child nutrition programs - The flat rate, based on number of meals served, is used in National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and others.

## 2 - Expand Offer-Versus-Serve

**Proposal** - Allow all sponsors the option of using "Offer-Versus-Serve" as in the National School Lunch Program. A meal will be reimbursable if the child accepts three of the five components offered.

### Current System:

Summer Food Service Program meals (and school lunch meals, etc.) are broken into required components - meat, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk - with a specified minimum amount of food from each group. For a meal to be reimbursable, all components of a meal must be served to every child.

Under the National School Lunch Program, school cafeterias that choose to use the "Offer-Versus-Serve" system (OVS), only need to make each component available. If the child selects at least three of the five components, the meal may be reimbursed.

Schools that utilize OVS during the regular school year, and are also SFSP sponsors, may utilize OVS during the summer. Other Summer Food Sponsors must serve the entire meal as a single unit in order to receive reimbursement.

### Problems:

Food waste is the primary concern when children are required to take food that they have no intention of eating. Wasted food is also wasted money which could be spent increasing the quality or serving size of the more popular components.

The milk component is a particularly troubling requirement. Special milk for lactose intolerant children is more expensive for sponsors who are already strapped to keep costs within the reimbursement rate. Lactose intolerance is very high among many non-white populations, particularly American Indians. This puts Tribal sponsors at a cost disadvantage to provide the milk component.

As word of the cost efficiencies of OVS has spread through the school food service community, more and more schools have switched over. All SFSP sponsors are non-profit organizations and are in need of any tool to help increase cost effectiveness. It is unfair to deny the majority of them use of a tool that has been shown to work for others.

### Advantages to Offer-Versus-Serve:

- Children are more likely to consume what they choose - The child may be required to put the vegetables on the plate, but no sponsor can force a child to eat something against the child's will. Allowing a choice helps to teach the child responsibility.
- Less food waste - The unchosen food most often winds up in the trash. This is a very poor lesson to be teaching children. Teaching conservation of resources should be part of any nutrition program.
- Lower food cost and increased program efficiency - School sites with OVS have found that food costs were cut by as much as ten to fifteen percent.
- No forced milk on the lactose intolerant - Children who are unable to digest milk products are spared the stomach aches (or worse) that are usually the result.
- Treats all sponsors equally - All tools to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness should be available to all sponsors, not just a single class of sponsor (ie: school districts).

### 3 - Reduce Site Eligibility Requirements

**Proposal** - Reduce the eligibility requirement for "open site" programs from 50% of population below 185% of poverty level to 40%.

#### Current System:

A Summer Food "open site" is one where all neighborhood children are allowed to eat free, without having to first certify family income. Open sites are allowed when the sponsor documents that the area in question has at least 50 percent of families living at or below 185 percent of the established poverty level. This is most often documented using school lunch eligibility data from the nearest school.

When the Summer Food Service Program was initially authorized, the open site requirement was 33-1/3 percent of population below 185 percent of poverty level. The requirement was raised to 50 percent to prevent children who do not "need" Summer Food from participating in the program.

"Enrolled sites" are possible in areas that do not meet the established criteria. At enrolled sites the family of each participating child must individually document their income. This system further builds the stigma that is often attached to being a food program beneficiary, and creates a barrier to program participation.

#### Problems:

Time and time again a sponsor would like to open a SFSP site near a large school site in a poor area only to discover that only 45 percent of the school qualifies. With a school of 1,000 children that is 450 children who are in need of the SFSP, but will not be able to participate.

What sponsors have discovered is that children whose families are above 185 percent of poverty level are not likely to participate in the program, even when located nearby. In the example above, the SFSP site, if allowed to open, would probably only attract children from the 450 who are eligible, not from 650 who are not.

The Summer Food Service Program is authorized as an entitlement program, meaning that all eligible children may participate. The 50 percent site requirement denies participation to many eligible children from low-income families.

The enrolled site option is rarely utilized because of the stigma attached to it, as well as the added administrative burden for the sponsor to collect the required income verification from each participating family.

Additionally, the official poverty statistics often do not tell the entire story. Kindergarten children usually only attend a half-day of school and rarely eat school lunch. They, therefore, are not included in the count. Neither are many high school students who choose not to accept a free school lunch due to the stigma of the program. Actual poverty rates are often higher than school lunch data would have one believe. This leaves unserved many areas that by all rights should qualify.

#### Advantages to Reducing the Site Eligibility Requirements:

- More eligible children would be able to participate - The purpose of SFSP is to bring continued good nutrition to low-income children when school lunches are not available. Reducing the site eligibility requirement would allow more sites to be established, making meals available to more hungry children.
- Enrolled sites could open their doors to the community - The conversion of many enrolled sites to open site status would help diminish the stigma of program participation encouraging more children to participate. The lessened administrative burden would encourage more sponsors to enter the program.

#### 4 - Streamlined Application for Renewal

**Proposal** - For agencies that have previously participated in SFSP or NSLP an abbreviated application process should be established consisting of a letter of intent, a listing of sites, and any changes to the initial application. Administering state authorities and the USDA would have the option to require full applications from agencies that have had "findings" against them in previous site reviews.

#### Current System:

The application process to become a Summer Food Service Program sponsor can be an extremely challenging and time consuming ordeal. Some examples of the kind of information collected include organizational charts, management plans, and copies of audits. Much, if not most, of this information remains the same from one year to another.

Sponsoring agencies must go through the entire application process each year, duplicating efforts, and wasting time and money. The amount of bureaucracy and paperwork involved in SFSP is often cited as a main reason why sponsors leave the program. That paperwork maze begins with the application.

Other Federal assistance programs (such as the Homeless Children Nutrition Program) allow continuing sponsors to reapply through a letter of intent only.

#### Problems:

The paperwork burden, and the administrative cost in processing it, creates a barrier for agencies wishing to sponsor SFSP. It has caused some sponsors to leave the program and convinced others not to enter it at all.

#### Advantages to Streamlining the Renewal Application:

- Less bureaucracy means more sponsors - Easing the paperwork burden on sponsors would encourage more of them to remain in the program, feeding more children. Less bureaucracy would also encourage more potential sponsors to start-up Summer Food sites.
- Lower administrative costs and greater efficiency - Eliminating duplicative efforts conserves an agency's resources and allows them to focus on other priorities.

## 5 - Restored Reimbursement Rate

**Proposal** - Restore cuts to the reimbursement rate contained in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Welfare Reform), adjusted for inflation. Future cost-of-living increases to be built into the reauthorization legislation.

### Current System:

The welfare reform law of 1996 cut the reimbursement for SFSP lunches by \$0.1475, breakfast and snack rates were similarly cut. Inflationary adjustments, made each January 1, remained in the law.

### Problems:

In the summer of 1997 SFSP sponsors received nearly fifteen cents less for each lunch served than they did in the summer of 1996. To make ends meet, many had to cut the quantity and the quality of meals served. Menus contained fewer healthful items, and relied on less expensive meats, such as bologna, that are higher in fat and sodium.

Many sponsors decided against re-applying for the summer of 1997 because of the cuts to reimbursement rates. Others did serve, but lost money and may not return for the summer of 1998. Other sponsors reduced their number of meal sites or served lunch only, instead of lunch and a snack.

The lower rates forced many sponsors to consolidate many sites into fewer, larger sites. During the summer of 1997 more children were served than in 1996, but at fewer sites. While this economy of sites works for urban areas, it leaves many rural areas unable to afford SFSP participation, reducing access to the program.

The full effect won't be known until applications for the summer of 1998 are submitted - or fail to be submitted, as the case may be. The purpose of welfare reform was to teach responsibility and reform a bloated bureaucracy, not to add to hunger.

### Advantages to Restoring the Reimbursement Rate:

- More sponsors and sites - Many sponsors would be encouraged to re-enter the program. More sites means more children will have access to nutritious meals.
- Better food quality - Sponsors can reduce their dependence "junk meats" and concentrate on good nutrition. Nutritious snacks would also be increased.

## Secondary Issues

The following suggestions were identified by the Roundtables to be secondary priorities for certain sponsors:

### Site Visit and Review Requirement Changes

Current regulations call for the sponsor to visit each site in the first week of operation, and monitor each site in the fourth week of operation. State and USDA officials each monitor sites annually. Pre-operational visits are made by State Agency staff.

Sponsors with multiple sites spread over a large area are hard pressed to visit all their sites in any meaningful way within the first week of operation. Allowing two weeks for the initial site visit and up to six weeks for the monitoring visit would allow sponsors to do a more thorough job of monitoring their sites.

Annual visits by both the USDA and State authorities wastes the resources of these public agencies. For sponsors who have had no "findings" against them in previous visits, official monitoring visits should be made once every three years.

Similarly, school sponsors who have recently passed inspection for the National School Lunch Program should be exempt from the pre-operational visit.

### Eliminate Site Restrictions for Private Non-Profits

Currently, private non-profit sponsors are limited to sponsoring only twenty sites, with a maximum of five urban sites. Originally, private non-profits were allowed the same freedom of site selection as public agencies. Changes to the program in the 1980's first eliminated all private sponsors, then allowed them back into the program, but with these added restrictions.

These rules severely hamper the efforts of sponsors in large urban areas. Many waivers to the site limit rule have been issued to private non-profits who have several years experience with SFSP without any problems. It is time to eliminate the additional restrictions and treat all sponsors alike, public or private.

### Allowing Food Off-Site

Currently, for a meal to be reimbursable, it must be eaten entirely on-site. No food may be reimbursed if the children take it home with them. As originally authorized in 1968, children could take meals to be eaten off-site. The rules were changed to prevent children from delivering full meals to adults.

Many small children have trouble eating the entire meal at one sitting, and would like to take their apple, or juice, or cookie home with them. Current rules do not allow this, and left-over food is thrown away instead.

Many SFSP sites are at public parks where it is difficult to confine children to one small area, but if they leave the area with food the meal is not reimbursable.

Allowing partial meals ("leftovers") to be taken off-site would decrease food waste, while still maintaining the integrity of a children's nutrition program.

### Increasing Allowance for Second Meals

Currently, a sponsor may serve "seconds" to only two percent of participating children. Many older children and teenagers need a larger meal to be satisfied.

Sponsors should be reimbursed for second meals served to up to ten percent of participating children.

### Realistic Administrative Costs

The administrative costs rate is widely recognized by sponsors to be approximately half of what sponsors actually spend on administration. Sponsors use funds from other programs in order to continue serving Summer Food meals.

The administrative costs reimbursement rate should be doubled to more closely reflect sponsors actual costs.

### Changes to Training Requirements

Each summer sponsors are required to train their entire staff. Many sponsors who have been a part of SFSP for several years with the same staff find this requirement to be a waste of time and resources.

Sponsors should be allowed the option of deciding how much "refresher" training their experienced staff members need. All new staff would still be required to go through full training.

### Eliminate Redundant Requirements

The rules and regulations governing the Summer Food Service Program contain many items that are duplicative, inefficient, or simply have no meaning. Some examples of this type of regulatory mess include:

- Information should be more important than the format - Sponsors are required to keep a daily count of meals served. Small, single site sponsors, who have used a weekly count form, with daily information, have been told by monitors to use a separate sheet for each day. This type of "form over substance" rule making wastes sponsors' scarce resources.
- Why collect information that is not to be used? - Sponsors are required to collect a beneficiary tally by ethnicity. This tally is done by sight, and is not very accurate information. It is then filed in a notebook in the sponsors office and never collected or used by USDA or any State agency. It is bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake.
- Information that already exists should not be duplicated - School districts who sponsor SFSP are made to repeat many procedures that they have already completed for the National School Lunch Program, including: making a pre-operational budget, the pre-operational State visit, and arranging a local Board of Health inspection.
- Requirements that have no meaning - All SFSP sponsors are required to notify local media of their sites. Enrolled sites, such as camps, are not exempt from this requirement. To meet the requirement, but not attract children they cannot serve, enrolled sites send out a press release with the heading, "Please do not print this."

All duplicative, inefficient, or meaningless regulations should be excised from SFSP.

## Other Ideas

The following suggestions were submitted by Summer Food Sponsors through the initial Reauthorization Surveys, but did not receive any votes to be included as Roundtable Priorities or Secondary Issues. They are still good ideas, however, and help to demonstrate the types of problems that Summer Food sponsors encounter.

- Start-up Grants, funded by USDA, should once again be available to sponsors with new or expanding programs.
- In states where SFSP is administered by a Department of Education, that department should supply a list of schools that meet the eligibility requirements, rather than put that burden onto potential sponsors.
- Sponsors who participate in multiple programs must maintain separate receipts for each. For example, to keep these receipts accurate the sponsor must order milk separately for SFSP and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Once a sponsor's food budget is approved by the State administering agency, the sponsor should be able to maintain a single record of all food purchases, and assign a percentage to each program.
- The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) should be merged into a single seamless Childhood Nutrition Program, with a single application and reimbursement process.

## Closing Note

For thirty years the Summer Food Service Program has helped to bring year-round nutrition to low-income children across America.

Sponsors are involved in this program because they believe in the importance of this mission. Many, if not most, lose money on this program, but they continue to sponsor SFSP sites because the children need it.

The California Sponsor Roundtable has come together to make these recommendations to the program regulations because they care about the Summer Food Service Program, and want to guarantee its' continued success.

The priorities and issues raised in this report come from the front lines in the battle against childhood hunger. These recommendations represent the voice of experience.

The California Sponsor Roundtable will work throughout 1998 to promote these priorities for Summer Food Reauthorization.