

## Universal School Meals Program Act of 2026: Endorsing Organizations

- **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**
- **ACT Bennington**
- **Addison Community Action**
- **American Heart Association**
- **Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market**
- **BROC Community Action**
- **Burlington Farmers Market**
- **Burlington School District**
- **California Association of Food Banks**
- **Center for Ecoliteracy**
- **Champlain Island Food Shelf**
- **Champlain Valley Union High School**
- **Chef Ann Foundation**
- **Colchester School District**
- **Deerfield Valley Food Pantry**
- **Essex Westford School District**
- **Fairfield Community Center**
- **Feeding Champlain Valley**
- **Feeding the Valley Alliance**
- **Feeding Wisconsin**
- **Ferndean Farm:** “Eating is not a privilege; it's a basic necessity.”
- **Food & Water Watch**
- **Food Bank of Northern Nevada**
- **Food Connects**
- **Food Research & Action Center:** “The Universal School Meals Program Act of 2026 would ensure that all children nationwide have access to the nutrition they need for their health and learning by allowing all schools to offer meals to all their students at no charge. Vermont — along with California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, and New York — has shown the nation what is possible with Healthy School Meals for All policies. Congress must follow their lead with a nationwide policy. We commend Senator Sanders (I-VT) for reintroducing this legislation and urge Members of Congress to co-sponsor the bill.” — Crystal FitzSimons, president of the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)
- **Food Studies Institute**
- **Food Systems Collaborative**
- **FoodCorps:** “At FoodCorps, we believe every child deserves access to nutritious school meals that help them learn, grow, and thrive. The Universal School Meals Program Act represents an important investment in students, families, and the long-term health of our communities by helping ensure no child falls through the cracks because of paperwork, stigma, or household income. We are proud to support policies that make healthy school meals more accessible while strengthening the connection between schools, local communities, and the food system that nourishes our children every day.”
- **Greater Bennington Community Services – Kitchen Cupboard**

- **Hunger Free America:** “Hunger Free America is grateful to Senator Sanders and Representative Omar for their continued leadership in the fight to end U.S. hunger. The U.S. Senate must do everything in its power to restore access to food for millions of working Americans after the unprecedented cuts to SNAP as part of H.R.1. These cuts make universal school meals more important now than ever before. Many states already offer free school meals to students, and it should be the national standard. Simply put, to be schooled, you must be fueled.” – Joel Berg, CEO, Hunger Free America
- **Hunger Free Colorado:** “Colorado has seen the transformative impact of providing access to free school meals to all public school students. It has reduced child hunger, eliminated stigma in the cafeteria and eased the burden on hardworking families across the state. We are now strengthening the program by investing in locally sourced food from farmers and ranchers, expanding from-scratch cooking and ensuring families and students have a voice in shaping meals that are nutritious, culturally relevant and appealing. Hunger Free Colorado strongly supports the Universal School Meals Program Act because all children deserve access to free, healthy school meals – no matter their income or zip code.”
- **Hunger Free Vermont:** “Universal school meals mean that every student can eat at school every day. Eating is elementary to education, and every student needs good nutrition to learn well. We are grateful to Senator Sanders and his colleagues for leading on this essential piece of legislation.” – Anore Horton, Executive Director
- **Hunger Solutions New York**
- **Indy Hunger Network**
- **Intervale Center**
- **Johnson Food Shelf**
- **KidsGardening:** “At KidsGardening, we believe no child should have to learn while hungry. The Universal School Meals Program Act is an important investment in children’s health, learning, and well-being while helping schools provide equitable access to nutritious meals for all students. We are proud to support this legislation and its commitment to healthier kids and stronger communities.”
- **Lamoille Family Center**
- **Lamoille North Supervisory Union**
- **Legal Services Advocacy Project**
- **MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger**
- **Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District**
- **National Education Association:** “No child should have to sit in a classroom hungry and try to learn on an empty stomach. Educators across the country have seen an alarming increase in student hunger since the Republican-led Congress and the Trump administration slashed SNAP benefits last year,” said National Education Association President Becky Pringle. “The NEA applauds Senator Sanders and Representative Omar for introducing the Universal School Meals Program Act. Congress can take a major step toward addressing this crisis by passing this legislation and ensuring every child has access to free, healthy school meals and the support they need to learn, grow, and thrive.”
- **National Family Farm Coalition**

- **National Right to Food Community of Practice:** “The Universal School Meals Program Act is a critical policy that will contribute to progressively realizing the right to food for all children in the United States.”
- **Neighborhood Roots Food Collective**
- **Neighbors in Action**
- **New Hampshire Hunger Solutions**
- **North Mason School District**
- **Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont:** “All children deserve to have access to healthy foods at school. We know that when kids have access to healthy food, it supports their physical and emotional health, improves school attendance, and improves their capacity to learn. For many children, school might be the only place that they have access to nutritious food, and it's imperative that we make it available to them without stigma or burden of cost.”
- **Northwest Harvest**
- **Nourish California**
- **Outright Vermont**
- **Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon**
- **Prosper Valley Farmer Collective**
- **Recovery Partners of Vermont**
- **Richmond Food Shelf & Thrift Store**
- **Salvation Farms:** “Providing an equitable meal program to our nation's public school population is so important. Removing the stigma of checks and balances on income eligibility for young people is necessary both for the health and wellbeing of children, and to eliminate the administrative burden on school nutrition professionals. Let's feed kids!”
- **Shelburne Farms**
- **South Burlington School District**
- **Southeastern Vermont Community Action**
- **United Way of Northwest Vermont**
- **Upper Kingdom Food Access**
- **Vermont Achievement Center**
- **Vermont Afterschool:** “Access to snacks and meals is a key component of afterschool and summer programs, and strengthening our school meals through this bill would create opportunities for increased access to meals for youth, financial support for schools offering food, and additional SUN Bucks for lower-income youth.”
- **Vermont Center for Independent Living**
- **Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance**
- **Vermont Farm and Forest School**
- **Vermont FEED**
- **Vermont Foodbank:** “In Vermont, Universal School Meals are one of the keystones in the foundation that creates food security for all children in our state. Vermont Foodbank and our partners are only able to serve the need we do because of universal programs like school meals and CACFP. As a parent who was just over the threshold for free-and-reduced price lunch when my children were young, I can attest to the fact that making meals universal for all students in learning and care environments is critical to improved

learning outcomes, support for families, and reduction in stigma experienced by children. Everyone in the United States of America deserves what Vermonters already has: Universal School Meals for All.”

- **Vermont Parent Child Center Network**
- **Vital Communities**
- **Voices for Vermont’s Children**
- **Washington Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition**
- **Washington School Nutrition Association:** “The Washington School Nutrition Association believes that high quality, nutritious food should be available to every child in the United States. School meals contain whole grains, fresh fruit and vegetables, low sodium and saturated fat, and an abundance of nutrients. Schools, as a public organization that provides free transportation, medical care, education, and other resources at no cost to families, should also offer meals at no charge. This is one of the best approaches for raising healthy and productive members of society.”
- **Windham Northeast Supervisory Union**
- **Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union**