



Free Summer Meals Program Has Been Extended

June 27, 2022 by Educator Barnes

It is no secret to any teacher that some students come to school hungry. At least, during the school year, teachers see the students and can take steps to ensure they eat at school. The summer, especially if students are not attending summer school, is a time when teachers worry if some of their students have a meal. One response to the pandemic eased the food burden for families.

The Keep Kids Fed Act was a bipartisan effort which resulted in free meals for students. Students did not have to be participants in the free and reduced lunch program. The act was set to end on June 30. It has now been extended through the end of the summer.

A provision had to be removed for the extension to be pushed through Congress. Originally, the extension would have included allowing students who qualified for reduced lunch to receive free lunch for the upcoming school year. However, keeping that provision wouldn't not have guaranteed the act would be extended so it was removed.

Next school year, the categories: paid, reduced, and free will return.

The short notice of the extension could place a burden on free lunch providers especially if they only had plans to provide free lunches until June 30.

Parents should reach out to their children's school to learn if there are any changes for free summer lunch. Additionally, if their children do not qualify for free lunch, they should be expecting lunch prices to increase to compensate for the increase in food costs.