

SCHOOL MEALS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND LEARNING

Proposed Cuts to School Meals Would Worsen Childhood Hunger, Hurt Struggling Families, and Create Unnecessary Burdens for **366** Schools in **ARIZONA**

House Budget Committee Chair Jodey Arrington (R-TX) has proposed \$12 billion in cuts to school meals programs for the 2025 budget reconciliation. The proposals would substantially decrease the number of schools eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and make it harder for eligible families to apply for free or reduced-price school meals at non-CEP schools. Combined, these proposals would reduce students' access to nutritious school meals and raise families' grocery bills, while imposing unnecessary and burdensome paperwork requirements on schools in **ARIZONA**.

What Is Community Eligibility?

CEP allows schools serving large numbers of children from families with low incomes to offer school meals at no charge to all students. Rather than relying on school meal applications to determine a school's federal reimbursements, CEP schools are reimbursed based on the share of students from families with low incomes, as determined through a data-matching process that identifies students' participation in other means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Currently, schools can adopt CEP if at least 25 percent of students receive these benefits.

CONGRESS MUST REJECT ANY PROPOSAL TO WEAKEN CEP

Chair Arrington's proposal would increase the CEP eligibility threshold for schools from **25** percent to **60** percent of students identified as receiving benefits. This would cut over 24,000 schools nationwide from participating in CEP and undermine the health and learning of more than **12 million children**.

Community Eligibility Supports Students, Families, and Schools

CEP is a win for students, families, and schools. CEP gives all students access to the nutritious school breakfasts and lunches they need to be well-nourished and ready to learn, while reducing the stigma often present in school cafeterias when schools have to track students' eligibility for free, reduced-price, and paid meals. **When students have access to free meals at school, families have lower grocery bills and more money in their household budgets to help make ends meet.**

CEP has grown in popularity since first becoming available nationwide over a decade ago. In the 2023–2024 school year, one out of every two schools that operated the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) participated in CEP. CEP makes school meal operations more efficient and effective: It eliminates the administrative burden associated with school meal applications, strengthens program integrity, and supports school nutrition finances by eliminating school meal debt and increasing participation in school breakfast and lunch, which allows for economies of scale.



IN 2023–2024 SCHOOL YEAR

522 SCHOOLS

in **ARIZONA** — which represents **29** percent of schools that participate in the school lunch program — adopted CEP, reaching **193,395** children each school day.

The proposed cuts to school meals would **increase hardships** for children and families across **ARIZONA**:



366

schools in ARIZONA would no longer be able to provide free school meals through CEP and would have to reinstate meal applications.



116

school districts in ARIZONA, listed on the reverse page, would be affected.



148,062

ARIZONA children attend schools that would no longer be able to offer meals at no charge to all students through CEP.¹

Rather than reducing access to school meals, **CONGRESS SHOULD INVEST IN CEP** and reduce barriers to applying for free or reduced-price school meals, so families can afford groceries and children have access to the nutritious meals they need to thrive in school and beyond.

The following table identifies the school districts in **ARIZONA**, and the number of schools and children within each district that would lose access to CEP if Congress increases the eligibility threshold to 60 percent of students identified as receiving benefits.

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
ACADEMY OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE SOUTH, INC.	1	686
ALTAR VALLEY ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	2	586
AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION D.B.A. APACHE TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL	1	179
AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION D.B.A. CRESTVIEW COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SC	1	247
AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION D.B.A. SOUTH POINTE HIGH SCHOOL	1	762
AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION D.B.A. SUN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL	1	252
AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION D.B.A. WEST PHOENIX HIGH SCHOOL	1	356
AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED DISTRICT	11	4637
APRENDER TUCSON	1	266
ASH CREEK ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	28
BALSZ ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	5	2275
BULLHEAD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	2650
CAFA, INC. DBA LEARNING FOUNDATION PERFORMING ARTS SCHOOL	1	180
CANON ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	133
CAREER DEVELOPMENT, INC.	1	61
CAREER SUCCESS SCHOOLS	2	380
CASA GRANDE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	7	3178
CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS, INC.	5	1051
CHOLLA ACADEMY	2	523
COCHISE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	1	357
COOLIDGE UNIFIED DISTRICT	5	2571
CORNERSTONE CHARTER SCHOOL, INC	1	175
CORTEZ PARK CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL, INC.	1	269

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
COVE DAY SCHOOL	1	58
CPLC COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DBA TOLTECALLI HIGH SCHOOL	1	70
CRANE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	10	5396
DOUGLAS UNIFIED DISTRICT	7	2415
ED AHEAD	1	26
EDKEY, INC. - SEQUOIA CHARTER SCHOOL	9	1759
EDUCATIONAL IMPACT, INC.	1	114
ELOY ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	3	853
ESPIRITU SCHOOLS	1	74
FRANKLIN PHONETIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, INC.	1	85
FRIENDLY HOUSE, INC.	1	329
GANADO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	1186
GEORGE GERVIN YOUTH CENTER, INC.	1	149
GILA BEND UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	578
GLENDALE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	6	4537
GREASEWOOD SPRINGS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, INC.	1	109
GREYHILLS ACADEMY	1	146
GRIFFIN FOUNDATION, INC. THE	2	125
HA:SAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	1	121
HARVEST POWER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP, INC.	2	1626
HAVASUPAI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	63
HAYDEN-WINKELMAN UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	327
HOLBROOK UNIFIED DISTRICT	6	1961
HOPI JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL	1	441
HUNTERS POINT BOARDING SCHOOL	1	77

The following table identifies the school districts in **ARIZONA**, and the number of schools and children within each district that would lose access to CEP if Congress increases the eligibility threshold to 60 percent of students identified as receiving benefits.

(continued)

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
HYDER ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	105
IMAGINE AVONDALE ELEMENTARY, INC.	1	489
IMAGINE CAMELBACK MIDDLE, INC.	1	218
IMAGINE CHARTER ELEMENTARY AT CAMELBACK, INC.	1	392
IMAGINE CHARTER ELEMENTARY AT DESERT WEST, INC.	1	685
IMAGINE COOLIDGE ELEMENTARY, INC.	1	572
IMAGINE DESERT WEST MIDDLE, INC.	1	420
IMAGINE PREP COOLIDGE, INC.	1	481
JOHN F. KENNEDY DAY SCHOOL	1	224
KAIZEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION DBA ADVANCE U	1	89
KAIZEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION DBA MAYA HIGH SCHOOL	1	353
KAIZEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION DBA TEMPE ACCELERATED HIGH SCHOOL	1	61
KINGMAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	3622
KYRENE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	384
MARICOPA COUNTY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	79
MAYER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	382
MILESTONES CHARTER SCHOOL	1	186
MOBILE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	26
MURPHY ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	4	1640
NACO ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	294
NOGALES UNIFIED DISTRICT	5	3649
OSBORN ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	4	2133
PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #8	2	770
PAINTED DESERT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS, INC.	1	107

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
PATHFINDER CHARTER SCHOOL FOUNDATION	1	481
PEACH SPRINGS UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	236
PENSAR ACADEMY	1	210
PIMA PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP	1	146
PIMA PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP DBA PIMA PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL, THE	1	145
PINE SPRINGS DAY SCHOOL	1	58
RED MESA UNIFIED DISTRICT	5	469
RESEARCH BASED EDUCATION CORPORATION	1	98
ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	18	7703
SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING AND MATH ARIZONA	1	238
SELIGMAN UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	164
SKYLINE SCHOOLS, INC.	6	1283
SOMERTON ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	4	1793
SOUTHWEST EDUCATION CENTER	1	40
SOUTHWEST EDUCATION DISTRICT	1	76
SOUTHWEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY	1	226
ST. CHARLES SCHOOL	1	125
STANFIELD ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	489
STEP UP SCHOOLS, INC.	1	55
SUPERIOR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	181
TEMPE SCHOOL DISTRICT	8	3892
THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE VALLEY	1	234
THE CHARTER FOUNDATION, INC.	2	281
TOLLESON ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	4	2681

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(continued)

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
TOLTEC SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	1201
TOMBSTONE UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	478
TOPOCK ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	122
TUBA CITY BOARDING SCHOOL	1	1052
TUCSON INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY, INC.	4	521
TUCSON UNIFIED DISTRICT	60	25970
UNION ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	3	1931
VERNON ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	108
VISTA COLLEGE PREPARATORY, INC.	5	1293
WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT	32	23423

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
WELLTON ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	180
WENDEN ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	79
WILLCOX UNIFIED DISTRICT	2	696
WINDOW ROCK UNIFIED DISTRICT	5	1742
WINSLOW UNIFIED DISTRICT	5	1847
YARNELL ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	38
YOUNG ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	2	43
YUCCA ELEMENTARY DISTRICT	1	37
YUMA PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL, INC.	1	125
YUMA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	4084