



## A HEALTHIER FUTURE

### Child Nutrition

Healthy children learn better and are more productive—both in and out of the classroom. Setting strong nutritional standards in our nation's schools is essential to combating the concerning obesity rates among American children. Providing our nation's youth with healthy food options and nutrition education is key to their long-term health and success, which is why National PTA supports policies that build healthy eating habits and ensure a brighter and healthier future for our children.

#### THE DATA

From 1970-2000, child obesity rates nearly tripled, and the current percentage of obese youth remains high at approximately **19%** <sup>[1]</sup>

Childhood obesity is a strong predictor of adult obesity, which has well-known health and economic consequences, both for the individual and society <sup>[2]</sup>

Serving healthy meals at school has been shown to increase student test performance by **3-4%** <sup>[3]</sup>

Approximately **6.5 million** children live in areas that are more than one mile away from a supermarket <sup>[4]</sup>

#### WE ADVOCATE TO



Ensure students in need have access to federal nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



Protect child well-being by maintaining nutrition standards in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010



Encourage healthier eating habits by promoting and increasing access to nutrition education and awareness programs for parents, youth and communities



Empower parents and families to work with their schools to improve local school wellness policies that address student nutrition and physical activity

## VOICE FROM THE FIELD

For years, Colorado PTA has made a strong commitment to addressing child health issues, including rising obesity rates and growing disparities in children's access to nutritious food. In spring 2016, former Colorado PTA State President Michelle Winzent decided to ramp up COPTA's advocacy on nutrition and **take action**.

Michelle helped Colorado PTA partner with Action for Healthy Kids and secure a grant for 40 Wellness Kits from the Colorado Health Foundation. The kits contained resources, materials and prizes for schools to host activities on health and nutrition education. **To help schools and districts use the Wellness Kits, Colorado PTA launched an advocacy campaign to educate schools and parents on how to maximize information in the Wellness Kits to improve their child's health.** The advocacy campaign included workshops, in-person meetings and webinar trainings for families, teachers and school leaders.

By June 2018, Colorado PTA had engaged over 40 schools in 19 school districts on the importance of healthy eating habits and well-being. Their trainings received positive feedback from parents, who noted how Colorado PTA's advocacy had improved their knowledge about nutrition.



**Michelle Winzent**  
Colorado PTA

## HEALTHY HUNGER-FREE KIDS ACT

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 authorized funding and set policy for the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) core child nutrition programs: the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The bill allows USDA to make reforms to the school lunch and breakfast programs by improving the critical nutrition and hunger safety net for millions of children.



<sup>[1]</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). (2018). [Childhood Obesity Facts](#). Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>[2]</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). (2016). [Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity](#). Geneva, Switzerland: The Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity

<sup>[3]</sup> Anderson, M., Gallagher, J., Ritchie Ramirez, Elizabeth. (2017). [School Lunch Quality and Academic Performance](#). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research

<sup>[4]</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). (2018). [Facts and Statistics](#). Washington, DC: President's Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition