



FACT SHEET

Food and Nutrition Education in Schools Act

Expanding food education in schools to provide hands-on learning for students

The bill provides funding for the USDA to establish a pilot grant program to create food and nutrition education positions in rural, urban, and Indigenous schools.

Food educators play a critical role in schools by showing kids where their food comes from, how it grows, how to prepare it, and why it's fun to try fruits and vegetables. Food and nutrition educators increase children's acceptance and enjoyment of the nutritious, tasty meals they are offered in schools, setting them up to make healthy choices for life.

The bill was partially inspired by FoodCorps' ten years of experience in on-the-ground food education, and we were honored to work closely with Sen. Booker and Sen. Cornyn's teams to help develop the pilot program.

Food educators support a schoolwide culture of health through:



Hands-on Learning



School Gardens



Taste-Testing



Farm to School Practices

These activities give students opportunities to try different foods and explore connections between their classroom, cafeteria, and school gardens.

COVID-19 and Food Education in Schools

The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of nutritional well-being, as communities who face systemic barriers to nutritious food were hit hardest by the pandemic. School meals are a vitally important resource in ensuring that our children thrive.

Gardening education has also proven important during the COVID-19 pandemic, when school gardens have served as physically and emotionally safe spaces for kids processing the trauma of the pandemic.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) is the foremost legislative opportunity to update federal school meals and child nutrition programs. If included in the next CNR, the Food and Nutrition Education in Schools Act will authorize the annual appropriation of \$10 million to the USDA's pilot program to place more food and nutrition educators in schools.



Benefits of Food Education



Students who get a lot of hands-on food education eat up to three times more fruits and vegetables at school than students who get less.



The majority of students who engage in 10+ hours of hands-on food education show improved attitudes toward vegetables, one of the strongest predictors of a healthy diet.



Food and garden education also improves academic, social, and emotional outcomes by cultivating positive attitudes about learning and building children's self esteem and social skills.



Engaging children with hands-on lessons help reduce food waste because students know where their food comes from and have experience tasting it before they see it on the cafeteria serving line.

Contact FoodCorps Senior Manager of Policy and Advocacy at mamiko.vuillemin@foodcorps.org. Learn more at www.foodcorps.org.

Food and Nutrition Education in Schools Act (S.1421) Cosponsors
Sen. Booker (D-NJ) and Sen. Cornyn (R-TX)