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What we believe

We believe in being honest about what it takes to fix school food. We don't believe in magical thinking, or that it just takes the will to fix the problem – it also takes a whole lot of money and enormous effort.

We believe that the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program are almost criminally underfunded by the federal government.

We believe that more money is needed for school meal programs, because healthier food like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean unprocessed meat costs more than corn dogs, fried potatoes and fruit turnovers.

We believe that schools should not have to choose between meeting students' academic needs and meeting their nutritional needs.

We believe that school student nutrition directors are not the enemy.

We believe that junk food has no place at school, and that junk food does not magically become healthy food just because it is being sold by a parent as a fund raiser for a really, really worthy cause.

We believe that the obesity crisis took years to develop and it will take years to reverse, because many factors contribute to child obesity – poor food choices, too little exercise, too much screen time, a surplus of food advertising aimed at children, too many opportunities to consume high calorie, low nutrient food – and just addressing one factor will not reverse the trend.

We believe there is no one silver bullet to solve the obesity problem, and that even though no one action alone will solve the problem, that is not an excuse for rejecting any individual change.

We believe that nutrition is a social justice issue because low income children of color are disproportionately affected by obesity and related disorders, are more likely to live in communities with few opportunities to play safely outside, have less access to regular health care, have few places to buy healthy food in their own neighborhoods, but many liquor stores selling unhealthy junk food, and are most likely to be on the low end of the academic achievement gap.

We believe that schools must offer high quality nutrition because hungry or malnourished children struggle harder than others to learn, and when children are hungry at school, they fall behind their peers and require costly remediation to bring their achievement up to the level of their peers.

We believe that change must happen now because children who are obese also are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, and to remain obese as adults, putting them at risk for heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, and osteoarthritis.

We believe that unrestricted advertising to children as young as 2 years old, and our culture's prevalence of high fat, high sodium, high sugar, and low nutrient foods, have produced children who are both obese and malnourished – they consume too many calories but do not derive enough nutrients from those calories to maintain good health.

We believe schools have a critical role to play in reversing the tidal wave of child obesity and combating malnourishment in children, as well as in educating students about making healthier eating choices.

We believe that parents are their children's first teachers, that children first learn about food at home, and that they benefit most from changes to school food, and from nutrition education, when making healthy choices is a priority at home.

We believe that advocates for better school food are most effective when they are well-informed about the current state of school food in their own community, and when they fully understand how changes have been made elsewhere, including how successful changes are financed.

We believe that school food can be healthier and that the best way to make that happen is for everyone who cares about the issue to work together, to share successes and talk honestly and openly about what it really takes to get to that goal. We are here to help connect parents, educators and advocates working for healthy school food – please join us!

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February 2011