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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**School Breakfast Coalition Calls for 15-cent per Meal Breakfast Funding
*Urges the Joint Committee on Finance to Invest in School Breakfast Program***

KIMBERLY, WI – On Thursday, May 27 the state legislature’s budget-writing Joint Committee on Finance will consider a provision to include 15-cent per meal funding for the School Breakfast Program in the state’s 2021-23 biennial budget. The School Breakfast Coalition urges the committee to invest an additional \$2.5 million annually in the essential educational tool.

The School Breakfast Coalition is led by the School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin (SNA-WI) and includes School Choice Wisconsin, Wisconsin Council of Religious & Independent Schools, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance, Hunger Task Force, American Heart Association, Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Wisconsin Public Health Association, and Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards.

The School Breakfast Program is a federal and state assisted meal program for public and private schools. The State of Wisconsin provides \$2,510,500 in annual funding for reimbursement to participating schools for each breakfast served. As a result of current funding, Wisconsin schools receive approximately 7-cents per breakfast despite the fact state law calls for a 15-cent per meal reimbursement rate.

“The combination of a flat state appropriation and continued utilization growth in the School Breakfast Program has resulted in lower reimbursement rates each year for participating schools,” says SNA-WI President Mike Gasper. “Declining reimbursement rates have created significant challenges for school meal programs for a decade.”

State funding for the School Breakfast Program declined by 10% in 2012 and has remained flat ever since, even as demand for the program has increased. Participation in the School Breakfast Program in Wisconsin has more than tripled since 2000.

Nutrition, like any other educational tool, enables Wisconsin students to be successful, which is why even when some schools closed last year during the pandemic, SNA members still kept feeding students. Through community drop off points, door-to-door delivery, and other innovative delivery models, school nutrition professionals kept their communities fed.

“Wisconsin students deserve every tool for success. Breakfasts and school nutrition are a tool like any other. Our students deserve 15-cent per breakfast funding,” says Gasper.

The Joint Committee on Finance’s action on Thursday, May 27 will determine school breakfast program funding for the next two years. Should funding remain stagnant, reimbursement rates will continue to decline as utilization of the program is projected to increase.

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