Costs of Nutrition Standards Threaten School Meal Programs

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) supports strong nutrition standards, including caps on calories and fat and mandates to offer fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Yet under the new rules, more than 1 million fewer students choose school lunch each day (USDA). Schools need more funding and commonsense flexibility to bring students back to healthy school meals.

“We all want schools to increase scratch-preparation using fresh, whole ingredients, but they are losing the necessary resources to achieve these goals.”

SNA President, Jean Ronnei, SNS

Nearly HALF of programs have reduced staffing, leaving fewer hands to do more work

8 in 10 programs have taken steps to offset financial losses, such as cutting reserve funds & limiting menu choices

Nearly 70% of districts are very concerned about availability of foods that meet future sodium limits; another 24% are concerned

74% of districts with a la carte services reported this revenue has declined, leaving less money to offset higher costs

71% of districts say the mandate that all grains must be whole grain rich is a challenge

Congress must provide more funding and flexibility for school meal programs. Visit SchoolNutrition.org/PositionPaper to learn more.

Source: SNA 2015 Trends Report