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November 14, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Peter van Moorsel *PvM*

RE: WRITTEN REPORT: SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAMS, SM 7

In 2007, the Legislature passed Senate Memorial 7 (Attachment 1), which requested that the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and the Public Education Department (PED), in conjunction with the New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger to prepare a survey on the feasibility of a summer food service program that each district would complete by no later than September 1, 2007. The memorial further requested that each eligible school district study the feasibility of summer food service programs for New Mexico students, and that the departments present the findings to the Governor and the appropriate legislative committee in their findings no later than October 30, 2007.

In response, PED has submitted the attached report (Attachment 2), which highlights findings of the survey and the feasibility study requested in the memorial.

The report includes descriptions of two programs—one operated by CYFD and one by PED—which serve children lunch during the summer:

- PED operates the Seamless Summer program, which aims to ensure that children in low-income areas continue to receive meals during summer vacations. The program is administered by approximately 30 percent of public school districts in New Mexico, though the report does not specify which districts.

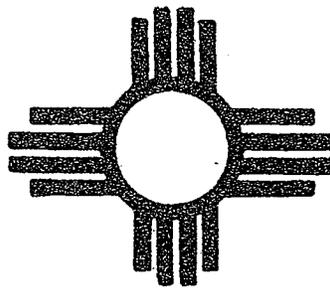
- CYFD administers the Summer Food Service Program, a federally funded program operated nationally by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). CYFD uses federal funds to reimburse statewide sponsoring organizations for the administration and service of meals to children ages 18 years and under, when school is not in session. The report states that 11 schools participate in the CYFD summer food service program, and that most of the sponsors of the program are nonprofit organizations. The report does not specify the districts or the other sponsors that participate.

The report identifies the following three problematic areas that act as barriers to district participation in summer food service programs:

- Low USDA reimbursement rates for school lunches—CYFD and PED report that the federal reimbursement rates for school lunches are insufficient to pay for salaries for food service staff, in particular because of higher costs of non-food products, such as paper goods. Many summer meal sites are not at schools where food can be prepared on-site, requiring the use of “heat and serve” meals, which cost more to prepare.
- A shortage of school district staff willing to work for the program over the summer break—higher salaries must be paid in the summer as an incentive for staff to work during the summer months.
- School districts’ insufficient means of transporting meals to children in the summer, and students’ lack of transportation to schools or other meal sites. As opposed to lunch during the school year, summer lunch programs require a significant investment in transporting meals and students to transportation sites, for which many districts lack the resources.

Based on the findings of the survey, PED’s and CYFD’s recommendations include:

- mandating summer food service programs statewide;
- increasing funding to school districts to assist them in feeding and transporting children during the summer months, and
- encouraging current summer food service program sites to remain open for the entire summer to ensure that low-income children are provided with year-round meals.



The Legislature
of the
State of New Mexico

48th Legislature, First Session

LAWS 2007

CHAPTER _____

SENATE MEMORIAL 7

Introduced by

SENATOR STEVE KOMADINA
SENATOR SUE WILSON BEFFORT
SENATOR CARLOS R. CISNEROS
SENATOR DEDE FELDMAN
SENATOR GAY G. KERNAN
SENATOR MARY KAY PAPER



1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING NEW MEXICO SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO WORK WITH THE
3 CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT AND THE PUBLIC
4 EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO EXPLORE OFFERING OR EXPANDING SUMMER
5 FOOD SERVICE PROGRAMS FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.
6

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico is ranked first in the nation in
8 food insecurity and third in hunger; and

9 WHEREAS, children in low-income communities are eligible
10 to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year
11 through the national school lunch and school breakfast
12 programs and those programs end when vacation begins; and

13 WHEREAS, the United States department of agriculture's
14 summer food service program helps children eighteen years old
15 and younger to continue to get the nutrition they need to
16 learn, play and grow throughout the summer months when they
17 are out of school; and

18 WHEREAS, the organizations that can be approved to serve
19 summer meals are school food authorities, governmental
20 entities, private nonprofit organizations, residential camps
21 and national youth sports programs; and

22 WHEREAS, meals can be served in apartment complexes,
23 boys' and girls' clubs, churches, community centers, migrant
24 centers, parks, playgrounds and school cafeterias; and

25 WHEREAS, the United States department of

1 agriculture-funded summer food service program can be
2 administered at a lower reimbursement rate in school
3 districts as a seamless summer program through the public
4 education department or administered by school food
5 authorities, governmental entities, private nonprofit
6 organizations, residential camps and national youth sports
7 programs as a traditional summer food service program at a
8 higher reimbursement rate through the children, youth and
9 families department; and

10 WHEREAS, less than fifty New Mexico school districts
11 administer a summer food service program; and

12 WHEREAS, only forty percent of children eligible for
13 free and reduced-price meals during the school year also
14 receive summer meals;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
16 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families
17 department and the public education department, in
18 conjunction with the New Mexico task force to end hunger, be
19 requested to prepare a survey on the feasibility of a summer
20 food service program in each eligible school district; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each eligible school
22 district be requested to complete a feasibility study and
23 present it to the children, youth and families department,
24 the public education department and the New Mexico task force
25 to end hunger no later than September 1, 2007; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor request each
2 school district to prepare a feasibility study on summer food
3 service programs for students in New Mexico; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the children, youth and
5 families department and the public education department
6 present a report on the study to the governor and to the
7 appropriate interim legislative committee no later than
8 October 30, 2007; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the governor, the secretary of public
11 education, the secretary of children, youth and families and
12 the New Mexico task force to end hunger. _____

SM 7
Page 3

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s/Diane D. Denish

Diane D. Denish, President

Senate

s/Margaret Larragoite

Margaret Larragoite, Chief Clerk

Senate



**New Mexico
Public Education Department**

RECEIVED
VIA E-MAIL

OCT 31 2007

**Senate Memorial 7 of 2007
Joint Report by
Public Education Department,
Children, Youth and Families
Department**

LESC
November 2007

Dr. Veronica C. García
Secretary of Education

DON D. MOYA
DEPUTY CABINET SECRETARY
Finance And Operations

DR. CATHERINE CROSS MAPLE
DEPUTY CABINET SECRETARY
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Joint Report on Senate Memorial 7 of 2007
Public Education Department,
Children, Youth and Families Department

Introduction

Senate Memorial 7 of 2007, sponsored by Sen. Steve Komadina, requested the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and the Public Education Department (PED), in conjunction with the New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger, to prepare a survey on the feasibility of a summer food service program in each eligible school district that each district would complete by no later than September 1, 2007. It further requested that each school district prepare a feasibility study on summer food service programs for New Mexico students.

The memorial requested that CYFD and PED report to the Governor and the appropriate legislative committee on their findings by no later than October 30, 2007.

In response, Leonard Mirabal and Barbara Kitay, from the PED's Student Nutrition Bureau, Cesar Uriarte and Elizabeth Castillo, from CYFD's Family Nutrition Bureau, and Mary Oleske, from the Human Services Department's Food and Nutrition Services Bureau, representing the New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger, developed and conducted the feasibility survey in the spring of 2007. The survey was made available to all school districts through Survey Monkey, and each district was e-mailed directions on how to participate. (See attachment 1 on page 6 for the survey questions).

Senate Memorial 7 stated that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-funded summer food service program can be administered at a lower reimbursement rate in school districts as a seamless summer program through PED. The USDA rates for the Summer Seamless program are set in July of each school year. They may also be administered by school food authorities, governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, residential camps and national youth sports programs as a traditional summer food service program at a higher rate through CYFD. The CYFD rates are higher because they are able to offer administrative costs and a higher reimbursement rate to schools that participate with CYFD. These reimbursement rates are set by USDA in January of each year.

SM 7 further stated, that less than 50 of New Mexico school districts administer a summer food service program with only 40% of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals during the school year also receiving summer meals.

Findings

Children in low-income communities are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. But those programs end when vacation begins. There are two programs in New Mexico that serve children lunch during the summer: PED's Seamless Summer and Children Youth and Families Department's Summer Food Service Program.

Summer Seamless Program

The PED's Summer Seamless (SS) Option ensures that children in low-income areas are able to continue receiving meals during summer vacations when they do not have access to school lunch or breakfast. The SS Option provides good nutritious food that's "in" when school is "out."

Under the SS Option, nutritional standards for meals served and claimed must meet the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)-School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal pattern requirements. The menu planning pattern option currently being used during the regular school year, as approved by the Student Nutrition Bureau, must be followed by the Local Education Agency (LEA) for summer meals.

For program purposes, a meal site has been defined as a school under NSLP-SBP regulations and may include enrolled (closed) sites or open summer feeding sites that are open to the community. Meal service sites may be located in a variety of settings where children can be found during summer vacation, including schools, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, public swimming pools, churches, etc.

Only 30% of New Mexico public school districts administer the summer seamless program under PED.

Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally funded program operated nationally by the USDA and administered at the state level by CYFD/Family Services/Family Nutrition Bureau. CYFD reimburses statewide sponsoring organizations for the administration and service of meals to children ages 18 years and under, when school is not in session.

The program is administered to children from areas in which poor economic conditions exist, that is, at least 50 percent of the children are eligible in a geographic area where meals are served. Sponsors are required to advertise the availability of the program and to document meal production, allowable costs and daily participation.

The state agency receives funds from USDA and reimburses local sponsors for the meals they serve. Reimbursement is made on a per meal basis. The local sponsor can use the funds to pay for salaries of the staff that will coordinate, prepare and serve meals.

The program is advertised in the newspaper by February 1. Applications are sent to potential sponsors and to all sponsors that participated the previous year. The applications must meet all established procedures and criteria before being approved to commence program operations. Workshops are scheduled to provide technical assistance. Notices of approval are mailed to the sponsor. Outreach efforts and technical assistance are an ongoing process.

The application proposals are evaluated according to an established set of federal regulations and state policies. Eligible sponsors must have attended the state agency training; show financial, administrative and record keeping ability to operate the program; demonstrate the ability to follow program regulations and contractual agreements; accept total responsibility for all sites where meals are served; serve meals that meet USDA standards for quality and nutrition; monitor the meal sites on a regular basis; and hire and train enough personnel to operate and manage each feeding site. The application agreement is made between CYFD and the authorizing official of the sponsoring organization. The programs are reviewed and evaluated.

Only a handful of schools (11) participate in the CYFD summer food service program. Most of the others sponsors are non-profit organizations.

Feasibility Study

The purpose of the feasibility survey was to identify problematic areas that act as barriers to participation. It identified the following areas of concern: Funding, Personnel and Transportation. (See Chart 1 on page 5) A total of 72 public school districts, including one charter school, and one BIA school responded to the survey. (See Attachment 2 on page 7)

1. **Funding:** USDA reimbursement rates are low and insufficient to cover salaries for food service staff. Reimbursement rates per participant for the Summer Seamless program are as follows:

USDA lunch reimbursements:

Paid	.24
Reduced Price	\$2.07
Free	\$2.47

USDA breakfast reimbursements:

Paid	.24
Reduced Price	\$1.05
Free	\$1.35

To resolve this issue, the Legislature could appropriate funds to subsidize the cost of the program, which would enable more schools to participate.

The cost of non-food products, i.e. paper goods, is higher in the summer. Due to feeding sites often being held off of school premises the summer menu is different. “Heat and Serve” meals cost more to prepare and serve and there are additional equipment costs for purchasing portable commercial grade warmers and coolers.

To resolve this issue, the Legislature could appropriate funding of .33 cents per tray, thus assisting school districts in defraying the increased costs associated with the summer feeding program.

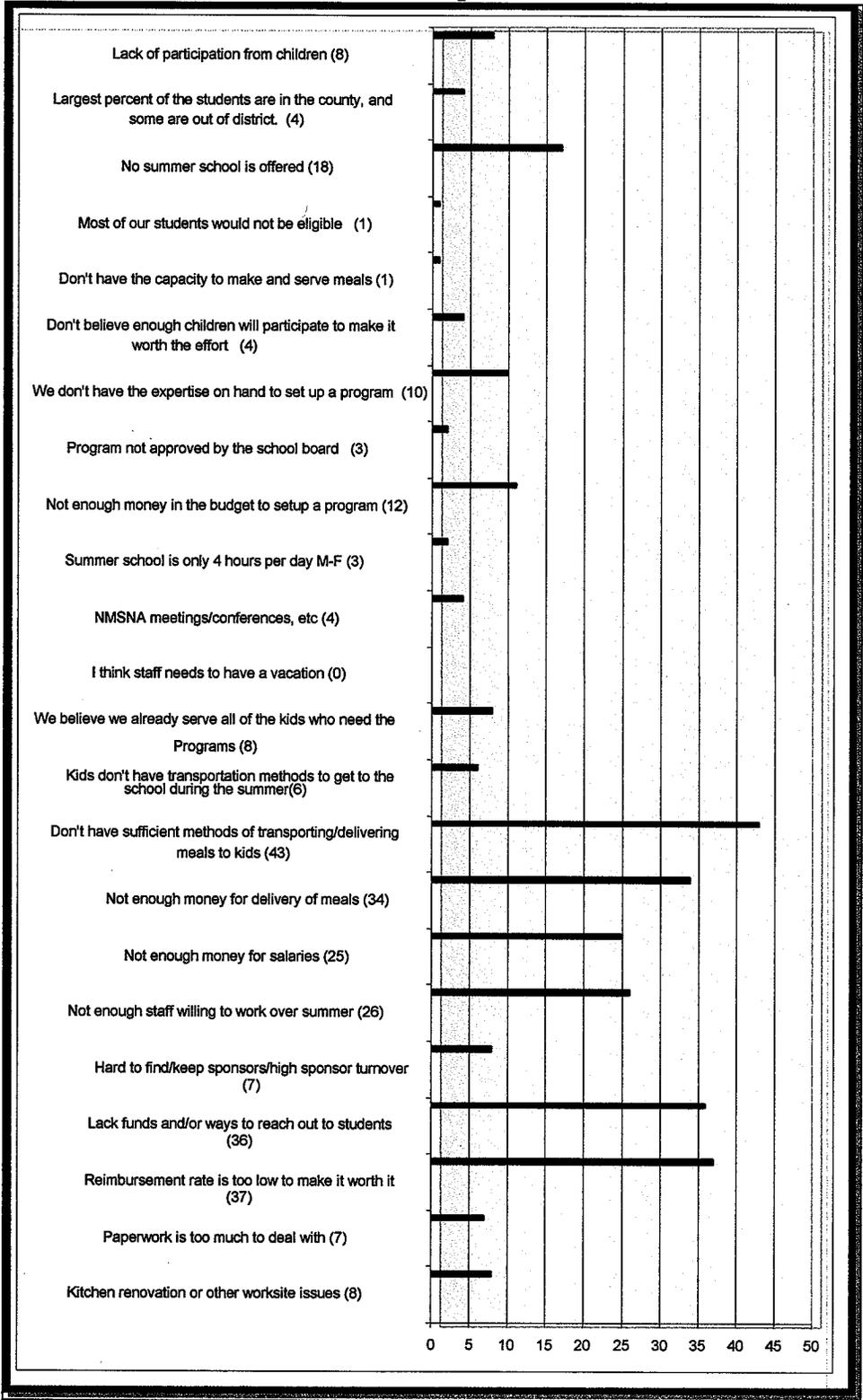
2. Personnel: School districts lack the staff willing to work over the summer break. In order to entice staff to work during the summer months, higher salaries must be utilized as an incentive to attract qualified personnel.
3. Transportation: School districts lack sufficient methods for transporting/delivering meals to children in the summer; also, children during the summer months do not have transportation to get to school or other feeding sites. (See Attachment 1 on page 6) In order to establish the amount of funding needed to cover the transportation cost, further studies would need to be conducted.

The study found that 33% of New Mexico school districts administer the SS Option. As shown in the findings, greater participation is directly tied to funding. Subsidized funding from the Legislature coupled with funding from the USDA would enable additional summer food programs to be implemented in school districts where there are no existing programs.

Recommendations

- Join other states such as Missouri and Texas and mandate Summer Food Service Programs (SFSP).
- Increase funding to school districts to assist them in feeding and transporting children during the summer months.
- Encourage current seamless SFSP sites to stay open for the entire summer in order to ensure that low-income children are provided with year-round meals. (Nationwide, while about 15.3 million children depend on free- or reduced- price school meals during the school year, only about 2.9 million, or about 19 percent, receive meals when school is out.) Many SFSP sites provide not just meals but educational enrichment and recreational activities that help children continue to learn and stay safe when school is not in session. The meals provided through SFSP act as “magnets” to draw children to these activities. In many communities, SFSP provides employment for local citizens and a boost to the local economy.

School Participation Barriers Chart 1



Attachment 1 Summer Feeding Program Questionnaire

1. School District Name
2. Address
3. Contact Name and Title
4. Does your school have a summer food program?
5. Is your program through:

CYFD (Summer Food Service Program)

Or

PED (Seamless Summer Program)
6. How many Summer Food meal sites are there in your district?
7. Of these, how many are non-school meal sites?
8. What was your average daily attendance (ADA) at summer sites in 2006?
9. What are your limitations to increasing your ADA during the summer program?
(Please circle all that apply)
 - Don't have sufficient methods of transporting/delivering meals to kids
 - Reimbursement rate too low to make it worth it
 - Lack funds and/or ways to reach out to students
 - Not enough money for delivery of meals
10. If you answered NO to question #4, what barriers prevent you from having a Summer Food Program? (Please list here)

Attachment 2

The following districts and schools identified transportation as a main barrier to participation:

1. **Albuquerque Public Schools**
2. **Belen Consolidated Schools**
3. **Bloomfield Schools**
4. **Borrogo Pass School (BIA School)**
5. **Carlsbad Municipal Schools**
6. **Central Consolidated Schools**
7. **Cloudcroft Municipal Schools**
8. **Clovis Municipal Schools**
9. **Cobre Consolidated Schools**
10. **Corona Public Schools**
11. **Cuba Independent Schools**
12. **Dexter Consolidated Schools**
13. **Gallup-McKinley County Public Schools**
14. **House Municipal Schools**
15. **Jemez Mountain Public Schools**
16. **Logan Municipal Schools**
17. **Los Lunas Public Schools**
18. **Melrose Public Schools**
19. **Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools**
20. **Mora Independent Schools**
21. **Moriarty Municipal Schools**
22. **Penasco Independent Schools**
23. **Quemado Independent Schools – Note: Children ride 40+ miles on the bus to get to school**
24. **Questa Independent Schools**
25. **Red River Charter School**
26. **Roswell Independent Schools**
27. **Santa Fe Public Schools**
28. **Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools**
29. **Taos Municipal Schools**
30. **Texico Municipal Schools**