

March 17, 2026

Secretary Brooke L. Rollins
Deputy Under Secretary Patrick A. Penn
Acting Associate Administrator Jessica Saracino
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretaries Rollins, Penn, and Administrator Saracino,

The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) is the largest nutrition advocacy coalition in the country, with more than 520 member organizations advocating for a healthier food environment. These organizations represent a variety of partners from diverse sectors, including program operators, researchers, and policy experts. For more than two decades, NANA members have worked at the national, state, and local levels to improve the nutritional quality of school foods. The NANA coalition led the successful effort to pass the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, landmark laws that led to the significant improvement of the nutritional quality of child nutrition programs, which have shown incredible progress in improving the diet quality of children and a decrease in childhood obesity rates. Given our longstanding bipartisan partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on child nutrition policy, we want to offer the expertise and engagement of NANA members as you undertake rulemaking on these programs.

As you consider changes to the child nutrition programs, we urge USDA to:

- Preserve and strengthen current evidence-based standards
- Work with Congress to ensure sufficient funding to implement updates – taking into consideration food, labor, infrastructure, and equipment costs
- Expand technical assistance programs
- Engage the food industry to ensure sufficient supply of products child nutrition programs will need to procure to meet new standards
- Prioritize timely release of nationally representative research such as the *School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study II* and use findings to drive policy

We urge USDA to engage NANA as a collaborative partner during rulemaking and beyond. Thank you for your time and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Heart Association
American Public Health Association

Balanced
The Center for Black Health & Equity
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Chef Ann Foundation
Chilis on Wheels
Coalition for Healthy School Food
Common Threads
Community Food Advocates
Farm Sanctuary
FoodCorps
Food Research & Action Center
Healthy Schools Campaign
Humane World for Animals
Kids in Nutrition
National Education Association
Nourish Colorado
Partnership for a Healthier America
Pilot Light
Save the Children
Share our Strength