

NEW YORK GROWN FOOD FOR NEW YORK KIDS

March 16, 2018

Dear Members of the Education Conference Committee,

We, the undersigned members of the *New York Grown Food for New York Kids Coalition* a statewide coalition of school, food, farm, anti-hunger and environmental organizations, strongly support the “Locally Sourced School Meal Reimbursement”, a \$10 million appropriation included in the Executive proposal and the Senate and Assembly One House Budget Bills. This funding will offer critical resources to help K-12 schools purchase healthy foods grown in New York.

We encourage that close attention be paid to the language specifying the standards under which K-12 schools could qualify for this meal reimbursement. Specifically, we recommend that the final FY 18-19 State Budget reflect the following:

That School Food Authorities that spend 30% of their reimbursable *lunch* costs on foods from New York State Farmers, Growers, Producers and/or Processors be eligible for this incentive.

This standard will ensure that all New York State schools have equal access to this program as schools in low income areas must provide more breakfast, after school meals and summer meals, and therefore have higher total food costs. Setting eligibility at 30% of total reimbursable *lunch food* costs will equalize access between low-income and wealthy districts.

That the language allows food grown or raised in New York State which is then processed outside of New York to also be eligible for inclusion in the accounting to get to 30%

This provision will ensure that New York farmers benefit from this program even if they raise or grow foods that are then processed outside of New York State.

We urge your support for the Locally Sourced School Meal Reimbursement and appreciate your attention to these important recommendations that will enable this incentive to more fully benefit schoolchildren and farmers across New York.

Sincerely,

See Attached List of Signatories

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