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HAWAI'I RANKS LAST AT SERVING AFTER-SCHOOL SUPPERS TO LOW-INCOME KEIKI

The state is foregoing more than \$600,000 per year in federal meal reimbursements as a result.

HONOLULU, Hawai'i – A new national report on federal after-school nutrition programs finds Hawai'i in last place when it comes to providing suppers to low-income students. [*Afterschool Suppers: A Snapshot of Participation*](#), published today by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), looks at how many children participate in after school suppers and snacks, both nationally and in each state.

Out of the 66,550 keiki who ate free or reduced-price school lunch in Hawai'i in 2018, only 259 also had an after-school supper. While the national average is 31 low-income students having supper for every 500 who ate school lunch, Hawai'i served only 2 in 500, the worst performance in the country.

While Hawai'i saw an increase of 77 children, or 41.7 percent, getting after-school suppers between 2017 and 2018, the prior worst-performing state, North Dakota, bypassed Hawai'i by increasing their after-school supper participation rate by 262.2 percent over the same time period.

“Today is Hawai'i Lights On Afterschool Day, celebrating after-school programs,” said Paula Adams of the Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance. “After-school programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. After-school programs are also an essential part of the effort to combat childhood hunger. Unfortunately, we are not offering enough meals during the after-school hours.”

These programs often see better attendance rates when they start offering suppers, and federal funding is available to serve supper to children at after-school programs in low-income communities. These dollars help children get a healthy meal after school, as well as free up needed funds for after-school programs. The District of Columbia led the nation by serving after-school suppers to 111 of every 500 low-income students who got school lunch. California and Vermont served over 50.

If Hawai'i were to reach FRAC's national goal of serving after-school suppers to 75 of every 500 low-income students, an additional 9,724 low-income keiki would be getting after-school suppers, and our state would receive about \$632,563 per year in additional federal reimbursements.

“We often hear from teachers and principals that many of their students’ families can’t afford to provide good, healthy meals at home. And we know that hungry keiki can’t learn,” said Nicole Woo, Senior Policy Analyst at Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice. “We all need to work together to increase the number of affordable after-school programs and the suppers served at them, to help support low-income students and families in our community.”

More information about enrolling in the after school suppers program can be found on the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs [website](#). To learn more about the federal after school nutrition programs, see the FRAC [website](#).

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The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy and coalition building.

The [Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance](#) is a network of individuals and organizations dedicated to supporting and advancing sustainable, quality after-school and summer learning programs that result in improved academic, social, emotional and physical outcomes for children and families in Hawai'i.

FRAC's [Afterschool Suppers: A Snapshot of Participation](#) measures how many children had access to after-school suppers and snacks in October 2018, nationally and in each state. Nationally, the Afterschool Supper Program served 1.3 million children on an average weekday in October 2018, an increase of 10.4 percent, or 126,393 children, from October 2017.