

Testimony for Healthy Schools Act of 2009
DC Council public hearing
March 26, 2010

My name is Leslie Nayman, and I am a mother of two children, one current and one future public school student. As a parent and a city resident, I urge the DC Council to pass the Healthy Schools Act of 2009 for the sake of all the city's children.

Last school year my daughter attended a DCPS elementary school, and I was not comfortable with the quality of the school food to allow her to buy school lunch, so I packed her lunch every day. This year, my daughter attends Washington Yu Ying Public Charter School, which uses Revolution Foods as its food vendor. While I am much happier with the quality of the food than the DCPS vendor, the cost of serving this higher quality food comes to \$4 per lunch, more than 3 times as much as lunch at a DCPS elementary school, which is \$1.25. Our family does not qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch, but we are unable to afford \$4 per day, so I continue to pack my daughter's lunch. If the price were more affordable for the same quality food, I would prefer that she participate in her school's lunch program.

I support the Healthy Schools Act of 2009 for many reasons, but I especially believe it is important that schools be given more money to go towards the purchase of local, unprocessed foods, since oftentimes those foods are more expensive than the alternative. This rebate would help keep the cost of a healthy lunch within reason for those who do not qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch.

It has been proven that healthy, fresh food promotes optimal health and intellectual development in children. Our children deserve the best we can give them, why would we serve them food that is anything less?