PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Correspondence Received

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS
HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LINDSEY P. HORVATH
JANICE HAHN
KATHRYN BARGER

			The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:	
Agenda #	**Relate To**	**Position**	**Name**	**Comments**
2-D.		**Oppose**	Stella Ndahura	
		Other	Brenda Zarate	Dear Board of Supervisors, Claremont Unified School District alongside the eighty (80) Los Angeles County school districts are aware that a vote is scheduled on the LA County Board of Supervisors meeting on November 10, 2026 for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division (LACDPHEH) proposed amendments to public health fees that will affect the budgets of school food authorities (SFAs) significantly. For Claremont USD, the increase will be over 400%. In addition, this does not guarantee that two health (2) inspections will be conducted for compliance for USDA. SFAs currently have a service agreement that is a fee-for-service with LACDPH for two (2) inspections per site cafeteria annually, each inspection costing $197.00. Each school cafeteria receives a Certificate of Inspection to operate. LACDPHEH plans on moving schools away from a fee-for-service agreement to implementing public health permits.The proposed new permits will cost each school site between $706 - $1,142 depending on how the cafeteria is categorized as low, moderate, or high risk based on the method of food preparation and service, for example, fast scratch cooking vs heat & serve. Most importantly, the proposed fee increase would divert funding equivalent to approximately 2,5000 student lunches annually, reducing the resources available to provide nutritious meals to the students who depend on school meal programs. SFAs serving USDA meal programs, such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, and/or Supper Program are a safety net for our students. They are reimbursement programs where the rates increased between 2.32%-4.14% at the highest between 2018-2025. For example, USDA lunch reimbursement in 2018-19 was $3.31, and for 2025-26 it is $4.76. The increases are pennies at a time.Unlike commercial food establishments, school nutrition programs are not-for-profit operations and have no authority to increase USDA reimbursement rates or pass increased costs on to students and families. Any significant increase in regulatory fees ultimately reduces resources available to feed children. We request the Board of Supervisors for the following: Postpone the vote for the LACDPHEH proposed changes to fees charged to schools

As of: 10/7/2026 9:00:13 AM

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Include SFAs for the discussion for the increase of fees that make sense for school cafeterias
Establish a separate fee category for SFAs participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs
Implement the fee increase in stages over a course of five (5) years
To help us better understand the cost of the proposed permits, we are requesting a copy of the analysis conducted for it.

Below is our reasoning for the request:
SFAs have zero authority to increase USDA reimbursement rates
School cafeterias, per USDA regulations, must have a HACCP Plan at every site; Per CalCode only smoking and curing facilities, facilities with live tanks of molluscan shellfish, and slaughter facilities are required to have a HACCP plan
School cafeteria staff receiving training annually on food safety, a USDA requirement
School cafeterias are not opened year round
School cafeterias have limited operating hours
SFAs serving federal meal programs are a safety net to our students, a vulnerable population that are not old enough to to cast a vote
Increased fees are hitting us on multiple directions
Proposed fees come on the heels of increased Plan Check fees.
Proposed fees also affect our vendor partners, such as milk delivery trucks, that will indirectly affect SFAs. If SFAs cannot cover our obligations, the school district's General Fund will need to make us whole.
Redirecting General Fund resources to regulatory expenses reduces funding available for academic programs and student services.
The proposed permit fees will take money from the mouths of our students and their academic success.

We are also concerned that the proposed fee structure appears to substantially increase costs without clear evidence that school nutrition programs present a commensurate increase in public health risk. Given the extensive food safety requirements already imposed on school meal programs, we respectfully request transparency regarding the methodology and analysis used to justify the proposed permit classifications and fee levels.

Los Angeles County has long prioritized child health, educational success, food security, and equity. The proposed fee increases risk undermining these shared goals by redirecting limited resources away from student meals and into administrative costs.

We recognize that fee adjustments may be necessary. However, an increase exceeding 400% places an extraordinary burden on federally funded nutrition programs whose sole purpose is to feed children. We respectfully request a collaborative approach that recognizes SFAs as unique public-service operations and develops a fee structure that supports both public health objectives and student well-being.

				Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to the students and families of Los Angeles County. We look forward to working together to find a balanced solution that protects public health while preserving resources for student nutrition and academic success.
		Item Total	**2**	
Grand Total			**2**	

As of: 10/7/2026 9:00:13 AM

Azusa Unified School District

Board of Education
Sandra Benavides, PRESIDENT
Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña, VICE PRESIDENT
Carlos Ramos, CLERK
Adrian Greer, MEMBER
Gabriela Arellanes, MEMBER
Guillermo López, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT

October 5, 2026

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Azusa Unified School District alongside the eighty (80) Los Angeles County school districts are aware that a vote is scheduled on the LA County Board of Supervisors meeting on November 10, 2026 for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division (LACDPHEH) proposed amendments to public health fees that will affect the budgets of school food authorities (SFAs) significantly. For Azusa USD, the increase will be over 420.27%. In addition, this **does not guarantee** that two health (2) inspections will be conducted for compliance for USDA.

SFAs currently have a service agreement that is a fee-for-service with LACDPH for two (2) inspections per site cafeteria annually, each inspection costing $197.00. Each school cafeteria receives a Certificate of Inspection to operate.

LACDPHEH plans on moving schools away from a fee-for-service agreement to implementing public health permits. The proposed new permits will cost each school site between $706 - $1,142 depending on how the cafeteria is categorized as low, moderate, or high risk based on the method of food preparation and service, for example, fast scratch cooking vs heat & serve.

Most importantly, the proposed fee increase would divert funding equivalent to approximately 5,800 student lunches annually, reducing the resources available to provide nutritious meals to the students who depend on school meal programs. For Azusa Unified School District Nutrition Services, health inspection costs are projected to increase from $2364.00 to approximately $13,704 placing a significant burden on a program designed to support student nutrition and food security.

SFAs serving USDA meal programs, such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, and/or Supper Program are a **safety net** for our students. They are reimbursement programs where the rates increased between 2.32%-4.14% at the highest between 2018-2025. For example, USDA lunch reimbursement in 2018-19 was $3.31, and for 2025-26 it is $4.76. The increases are **pennies** at a time. Unlike commercial food establishments, school nutrition programs are not-for-profit operations and have no authority to increase USDA reimbursement rates or pass increased costs on to students and families. Any significant increase in regulatory fees ultimately reduces resources available to feed children.

We request the Board of Supervisors for the following:

- Postpone the vote for the LACDPHEH proposed changes to fees charged to schools
- Include SFAs for the discussion for the increase of fees that make sense for school cafeterias
- Establish a separate fee category for SFAs participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs
- Implement the fee increase in stages over a course of five (5) years
- To help us better understand the cost of the proposed permits, we are requesting a copy of the analysis conducted for it.

Below is our reasoning for the request:

- SFAs have zero authority to increase USDA reimbursement rates

Azusa

Board of Education
Sandra Benavides, PRESIDENT
Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña, VICE PRESIDENT
Carlos Ramos, CLERK
Adrian Greer, MEMBER
Gabriela Arellanes, MEMBER

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- School cafeteria staff receiving training annually on food safety, a USDA requirement
- School cafeterias are not opened year round
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- SFAs serving federal meal programs are a **safety net** to our students, a vulnerable population that are not old enough to cast a vote
- Increased fees are hitting us on multiple directions
    - Proposed fees come on the heels of increased Plan Check fees.
    - Proposed fees also affect our vendor partners, such as milk delivery trucks, that will indirectly affect SFAs
- If SFAs cannot cover our obligations, the school district's General Fund will need to make us whole
    - Redirecting General Fund resources to regulatory expenses reduces funding available for academic programs and student services
- The proposed permit fees will take money from the mouths of our students and their academic success

We are also concerned that the proposed fee structure appears to substantially increase costs without clear evidence that school nutrition programs present a commensurate increase in public health risk. Given the extensive food safety requirements already imposed on school meal programs, we respectfully request transparency regarding the methodology and analysis used to justify the proposed permit classifications and fee levels.

Los Angeles County has long prioritized child health, educational success, food security, and equity. The proposed fee increases risk undermining these shared goals by redirecting limited resources away from student meals and into administrative costs.

We recognize that fee adjustments may be necessary. However, an increase exceeding 420.27% places an extraordinary burden on federally funded nutrition programs whose sole purpose is to feed children. We respectfully request a collaborative approach that recognizes SFAs as unique public-service operations and develops a fee structure that supports both public health objectives and student well-being.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to the students and families of Los Angeles County. We look forward to working together to find a balanced solution that protects public health while preserving resources for student nutrition and academic success.

Sincerely,

Stella Ndahura
Stella Ndahura
Director, Nutrition Services

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Phone: (626) 967-6211 | Fax: (626) 858-6123