



FAITH LEADER TOOLKIT: SCHOOL LUNCH FUNDING

TOP LINES

- In early May, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it would withhold school lunch funding from schools that do not comply with the Biden Administration’s radical gender ideology policies and redefinition of Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination based on sex to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.”
- Approximately 29 million American schoolchildren rely on this funding for meals at school, and roughly 100,000 schools and childcare facilities across the country need the funds to provide meals to children.
- While this regulation exempts religious schools [due to a lawsuit](#) filed by the Alliance Defending Freedom, all non-religious and public schools remain subject to the Biden Administration’s new gender policies.
- According to surveys conducted by Scott Rasmussen, 70% of American voters believe that elementary school children should not be taught that they can change their gender. 69% of those polled think withholding school lunches to pursue gender ideology is inappropriate, and 61% oppose allowing biological males to use women’s restrooms. This data illustrates that the Biden Administration’s weaponization of the federal government to push harmful gender ideologies on our Nation’s children is far out of step with the beliefs of the majority of the American people.
- This document aims to equip faith leaders to educate their congregations on these actions better and empower their communities to stand up for the beliefs they hold dear.

INTRODUCTION

Across the country, 100,000 schools and residential childcare institutions rely on federal funding through the National School Lunch Program to provide meals to children in need. The school lunch program serves breakfast, lunch, or both to [more than](#) 29 million children each day and served approximately 4.9 billion meals in 2019 (before pandemic-related school closures). Unfortunately, recent actions by the Biden Administration indicate that it prioritizes the imposition of a radical gender ideology agenda over the health and nutrition of America’s school children.

On his first day in office, President Joe Biden [released](#) his “Executive Order on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation.” This order required every federal agency to review each policy that prohibits discrimination based on sex and to either interpret or amend those policies to include both “gender identity” and “sexual orientation.” This vast and post-modern expansion of non-discrimination law—promulgated by unelected bureaucratic agencies rather than elected officials—represents a significant threat to faith-based institutions and religious individuals across our Nation, as they now must accommodate gender identity and sexual orientation demands of all individuals or risk losing their federal funding by choosing to maintain their religious beliefs.

In line with this order, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently [announced](#) it would interpret both Title IX and the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008's prohibitions on discrimination based on sex also to mean "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" when it comes to lunch funding in our Nation's public schools.

In their [memo](#) dated May 5, 2022, the USDA asked Food and Nutrition Act program workers and state agencies to "ensure complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation are processed and evaluated as complaints of discrimination on the basis of sex." The memo further states that there will be no "grace period for accepting and processing discrimination complaints based on sexual orientation and gender identity" in these programs.

By conditioning school lunch funding on the acceptance of gender identity, President Biden's USDA is holding America's schoolchildren hostage to its radical agenda. If a public school does not recognize a student by their self-proclaimed "gender identity," it risks being cut off from the federal funding it relies upon to feed meals to its needy children.

This means that bathrooms, sports teams, locker rooms, breakout groups, and more—in short, all aspects of campus life—are now required to accommodate children's subjective claims of gender identity regardless of objective biological fact. The Biden Administration has ensured biological males are guaranteed access to girls' sports teams, locker rooms, and even bathrooms. If a school refuses to accept these outrageous demands due to its religious convictions (or even common sense), it's the children who are punished by losing access to school lunches.

Because of the Biden Administration's pursuit of this novel, divorced-from-reality ideological agenda, America's most vulnerable children might go hungry as schools are forced to choose between federal funds and biological truth. Currently, 26 states have [joined](#) a lawsuit against the ruling to stop this outrageous attack on our Nation's schools. The bottom line is this: the Biden Administration is playing politics with the health of America's school children.

POLLING DATA¹

- 69% of registered voters believe it is inappropriate to withhold school lunch funding from schools that do not follow the Biden Administration's gender guidelines, including 56% who think it is "very inappropriate."
- 78% of voters say it is very easy or somewhat easy to define what a woman is.
- 70% of voters believe that young elementary school children should not be taught that they can change their gender (only 15% said they should be taught this idea).
- 63% of voters say that performing transgender surgery on young children should be against the law.
- 61% of voters oppose allowing biological males to use the women's restrooms under the Biden Administration's new guidance.

SCRIPTURE'S TEACHING

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." *Genesis 1:27*

¹ Polling from Scott Rasmussen/RMG Research

“And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. But if you cause one of these little ones who trust me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.” *Matthew 18:5-6*

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” *Proverbs 22:6*

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” *3 John 1:4*

VALUES MESSAGING

- ❖ *The Biden Administration is once again putting its radical agenda above the health of our children and threatening religious liberty in this country.*
 - Tens of millions of American children in need rely on school lunch funding to be nourished every day. By conditioning this funding on adherence to an ideological agenda, the Biden Administration is placing a political agenda above the health of America’s children.
- ❖ *This radical transgender ideology is being pushed at all levels of the federal government.*
 - On the first day of the Biden Administration, President Biden issued an executive order requiring every single federal agency to reevaluate their non-discrimination laws and, if necessary, rework them to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” Most notably, this applies to education through Title IX, housing through the Fair Housing Act, and immigration law through the Immigration Act of 1965.

CALL TO ACTION

1. Submit a comment on the Title IX Proposed Rule.
2. Ensure that schools in your area know their rights and are not intimidated by the Biden Administration.
3. Fight for the parental choice rights of all parents to determine where they send their children to school and how schools should accommodate parental and community concerns about radical gender identity policies in school.
4. Encourage your community to reach out to its teachers and school board members and request transparency on all gender identity policies in the school.
5. Encourage your congregation to vote in school board elections.
6. Spread this information to ensure parents across the country are informed. Copy and paste the above information to your social media pages or make a video about this.
7. Encourage parents to have meaningful conversations with their children about what they are learning in school.
8. Run for school board or encourage others who represent faith-based values to run.
9. Send letters to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and the USDA to rescind this guidance.