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FOOD DESERTS AND FOOD SWAMPS IN SCHOOLS AND IMPLICATIONS

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Article Info

Abstract

Food deserts and swamps in schools pose significant challenges to students' health and well-being. Food deserts, characterized by limited access to healthy food options, and food swamps, marked by an overabundance of unhealthy food options, can contribute to poor nutrition, obesity, and related health issues. These environments can also negatively impact academic performance, attendance, and overall quality of life. Addressing food deserts and swamps in schools requires a comprehensive approach that involves improving food options, promoting nutrition education, and creating supportive environments that foster healthy eating habits. By prioritizing students' health and well-being, schools can play a critical role in promoting healthy lifestyles and academic success.

Keywords:

Food deserts, food swamp, proteins, fats, empty calories, school, health, obesity.

Introduction

Unhealthy food environments at schools or community levels contribute to health problems. Majority of food deserts and swamps are because of several factors. Factors affecting availability of food deserts, and food swamps, and unhealthy foods include, lack of education or awareness about healthy eating and poor food systems. In schools, due to poor food environments children, youngsters, staff, are forced to consume unhealthy foods stuffs. The results of effects of unhealthy food stuffs are many, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, gastrointestinal problems, malnutrition, behavior change, poor academic performance, and many more. Generally, the consumption of unhealthy foods spur consequences of diseases and hospitalizations, whereby unhealthy people cannot learn or work properly (Berkley, 2023). Therefore, for better learning and working environment it is emphatic to stress the implications of food deserts and food swamps at schools so that people are informed to take control measures (Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

The issue of food deserts and food swamps in schools has become a pressing concern in recent years, as it has significant implications for the health, well-being, and academic performance of students. Food deserts refer to areas where access to healthy and nutritious food is limited, while food swamps are areas where unhealthy and high-calorie food options are abundant. Schools, particularly those in low-income communities, are often plagued by these issues, which can have far-reaching consequences for students. The food environment in and around schools plays a critical role in shaping students' eating habits and dietary choices. When schools fail to provide healthy food options, students are more likely to rely on convenience foods and snacks that are high in calories, sugar, and unhealthy fats. This can lead to a range of health problems, including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease (Berkley, 2023). Furthermore, a diet that is high in processed and unhealthy foods can also negatively impact cognitive function, attention span, and overall academic performance. The impact of food deserts and swamps in schools is not limited to individual students; it also has broader implications for the health and well-being of the community. Schools are not just places of learning, but also play a critical role in shaping the habits and behaviors of future generations. When schools prioritize healthy food options and nutrition education, they can help students develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime (Qiu, 2016; Whiteland, 2023).

In many cases, schools in low-income communities are more likely to be surrounded by fast food restaurants, convenience stores, and other establishments that peddle unhealthy food options. At the same time, these schools may lack access to grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other sources of fresh and healthy food. This can create a perfect storm of unhealthy food options that can be difficult for students to navigate. To address the issue of food deserts and swamps in schools, it is essential to take a comprehensive approach that involves multiple stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members (Qiu, 2016; Chen & Gegg, 2025). This can involve improving food options in school cafeterias, promoting nutrition education, and creating policies that support healthy eating habits. By working together, we can help create healthier and more supportive learning environments that prioritize the well-being and academic success of all students.

Food deserts

Food deserts are areas with limited access to affordable, nutritious food, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. These areas often have a high concentration of fast-food restaurants and convenience stores that sell processed and unhealthy foods, making it difficult for residents to maintain a healthy diet. Food deserts can be found in both urban and rural areas and are often associated with socioeconomic disparities, limited transportation options, and a lack of grocery stores or markets selling fresh produce. This can lead to negative health outcomes, such as increased rates of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related health issues. The term "food desert" highlights the need for improved access to healthy food options, particularly

in underserved communities. Addressing food deserts requires a multifaceted approach that involves community engagement, policy changes, and innovative solutions to increase access to nutritious food (Qiu, 2016; Chen & Gegg, 2025).

Food swamps

Food swamps are areas with an overabundance of unhealthy food options, such as fast-food restaurants, convenience stores, and snack food vendors. These areas often have a high concentration of advertisements and promotions for unhealthy foods, making it difficult for individuals to make healthy choices. Food swamps can contribute to unhealthy eating habits and diet-related health issues, such as obesity and diabetes, by creating an environment that promotes the consumption of high-calorie, high-fat, and high-sugar foods. Unlike food deserts, which are characterized by a lack of healthy food options, food swamps are marked by an overabundance of unhealthy options that can "swamp" out healthier choices. Food swamps can be particularly problematic in low-income and minority communities, where residents may already face limited access to healthy food options and other health-promoting resources. Addressing food swamps requires a comprehensive approach that involves policy changes, community engagement, and innovative solutions to promote healthier food options and environments (Qiu, 2016; Chen & Gegg, 2025).

Food deserts in school

Food deserts in schools refer to the lack of access to healthy and nutritious food options within school environments. This can include limited availability of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other nutrient-dense foods in school cafeterias, vending machines, or snack bars. Characteristics of food deserts in schools may include:

- Limited healthy food options

- Prevalence of processed and high-calorie foods

- Lack of nutrition education

- Unhealthy food marketing

Consequences for students may include:

- Poor nutrition and health outcomes

- Increased risk of obesity and related health issues

- Decreased academic performance and attendance

By addressing food deserts in schools, we can help students develop healthy eating habits and improve their overall well-being (Qiu, 2016; Chen & Gegg, 2025).

Food swamp in school

A food swamp in school refers to an environment where unhealthy food options are overwhelmingly prevalent, making it difficult for students to make healthy choices. This can include:

- Vending machines stocked with sugary snacks and drinks

- School stores or snack bars selling high-calorie, high-sugar, or high-sodium foods

- Fun draisers or events featuring unhealthy foods

- Limited or no availability of healthy food options

Food swamps in schools can contribute to unhealthy eating habits, obesity, and other diet-related health issues among students. They can also undermine efforts to promote healthy eating and nutrition education. By creating a healthier food environment, schools can support students' well-being and academic success (Qiu, 2016; United Way of Olmsted County, 2018; Chen & Gegg, 2025).

Implications of food deserts and food swamps in schools

The implications of food deserts and food swamps in schools can be significant, affecting students health, well-being, and academic performance. Some potential implications include:

Health Implications:

1. Poor Nutrition-Limited access to healthy food options can lead to poor nutrition, which can negatively impact students' physical and mental health.
2. Obesity and Related Health Issues-Consuming high-calorie, high-fat, and high-sugar foods can contribute to obesity and related health issues, such as diabetes an ()d heart disease.
3. Nutrient Deficiencies-Inadequate access to fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can lead to nutrient deficiencies, which can impact students' energy levels, concentration, and overall health.

Academic Implications:

1. Decreased Academic Performance-Poor nutrition can negatively impact students' cognitive function, leading to decreased academic performance and lower grades.
2. Increased Absenteeism-Health problems related to poor nutrition can lead to increased absenteeism, which can further impact academic performance.
3. Decreased Concentration and Focus-Consuming high-sugar and high-caffeine foods and drinks can lead to energy crashes and decreased concentration and focus.

Social Implications:

1. Unhealthy Eating Habits-Food deserts and food swamps in schools can promote unhealthy eating habits, which can be difficult to change later in life.
2. Social and Emotional Impacts-Poor nutrition can impact students' mood, behavior, and social interactions, potentially leading to social and emotional problems.
3. Inequitable Access-Food deserts and food swamps can disproportionately affect certain student populations, such as those from low-income backgrounds, exacerbating existing health and academic disparities.

Long-term Implications:

1. Lifelong Health Consequences-Poor nutrition and unhealthy eating habits established in school can have lifelong health consequences, including increased risk of chronic diseases.
2. Economic Burden- The economic burden of diet-related health issues can be significant, impacting individuals, families, and society as a whole.

By understanding the implications of food deserts and food swamps in schools, educators, policymakers, and parents can work together to create healthier food environments that support students' health, well-

being, and academic success (Qiu, 2016; United Way of Olmsted County, 2018; Tegmire et al., 2021; Shankar et al., 2024; Chen & Gegg, 2025).

Carbohydrates and their uses

Carbohydrates are a vital macronutrient that serves as a primary source of energy for the body. They come in various forms, including:

1. Sugars (simple carbohydrates)-found in fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and added sugars.
2. Starches (complex carbohydrates)-found in grains, legumes, and starchy vegetables.
3. Fiber: a type of complex carbohydrate found in plant-based foods.

The uses of carbohydrates include:

1. Energy production-Carbohydrates are broken down into glucose, which is then used by cells to produce energy.
2. Brain function-Glucose is essential for proper brain function and cognitive performance.
3. Physical performance-Carbohydrates are an important fuel source for athletes and individuals engaging in physical activity.
4. Digestive health-Fiber helps regulate bowel movements, promote satiety, and support healthy gut bacteria.

Good sources of carbohydrates include, whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat bread), fruits (apples, bananas, berries), vegetables (broccoli, carrots, sweet potatoes), and legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas). It's essential to choose complex, fiber-rich carbohydrates and limit added sugars for optimal health benefits (Rezaei et al., 2017; Sheena, 2020; Michigan WIC Program, 2022).

P**roteins and their uses**

Proteins are essential macronutrients that play a crucial role in various bodily functions. They are composed of amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins. Uses of proteins include:

1. Building and repairing tissues-Proteins help build and repair muscles, bones, skin, and hair.
2. Producing enzymes and hormones-Proteins are used to produce enzymes and hormones that regulate various bodily functions.
3. Maintaining fluid balance-Proteins help regulate fluid balance in the body.
4. Supporting immune function-Proteins are involved in the production of antibodies that help fight infections.
5. Providing energy: Proteins can be used as a source of energy when carbohydrates and fats are not available.

Important functions of proteins, include, muscle growth and repair, bone health, immune system function

1. 4.Hormone regulation
2. Enzyme production

Examples of good sources of proteins are as follows:

1. Animal-based sources: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products
2. Plant-based sources: legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas), nuts, seeds, whole grains

Some examples of high-protein foods: Lean meats (chicken, turkey), Fish and seafood (salmon, tuna, shrimp), Legumes (black beans, chickpeas, lentils), Nuts and seeds (almonds, chia seeds, hemp seeds), Eggs and dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt). Adequate protein intake is essential for maintaining overall health and supporting various bodily functions (Bhagyalakshmi et al., 2022; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Lipid and their uses

Lipids are a type of macronutrient that plays a vital role in various bodily functions. They are an essential source of energy and have numerous uses in the body. Some of the main uses of lipids include:

1. Energy storage: Lipids serve as a concentrated source of energy for the body.
2. Cell membrane structure: Lipids are a key component of cell membranes, helping to maintain their structure and function.
3. Hormone production: Lipids are involved in the production of various hormones, such as steroids and eicosanoids.
4. Vitamin absorption: Lipids help absorb fat-soluble vitamins, such as vitamins A, D, E, and K.
5. Brain function: Lipids are essential for brain function and development.

Good sources of lipids:

1. Healthy fats: Avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil
2. Fatty fish: Salmon, tuna, mackerel
3. Plant-based oils: Coconut oil, flaxseed oil

It's essential to maintain a balanced intake of lipids, as excessive consumption can contribute to health issues, such as obesity and heart disease (Saraca et al., 2020; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Phytonutrients and their uses

Phytonutrients are bioactive compounds found in plant-based foods, offering numerous health benefits. They are essential for maintaining overall well-being and reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Types of phytonutrients are underneath:

1. Carotenoids (found in colorful fruits and vegetables)
2. Flavonoids (found in tea, berries, and citrus fruits)
3. Polyphenols (found in green tea, dark chocolate, and extra-virgin olive oil)

Uses and benefits of phytonutrients:

1. Antioxidant properties: Protect cells from oxidative damage
2. Anti-inflammatory effects: Reduce inflammation and improve overall health
3. Cancer prevention: May help reduce cancer risk
4. Cardiovascular health: Support heart health and reduce cardiovascular disease risk
5. Immune system support: Enhance immune function

Food sources rich in phytonutrients:

1. Fruits (berries, citrus fruits, apples)
2. Vegetables (leafy greens, bell peppers, tomatoes)
3. Legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas)

4. Nuts and seeds (walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds)
5. Whole grains (quinoa, brown rice, whole wheat)

Incorporating phytonutrient-rich foods into your diet can have numerous health benefits, supporting overall well-being and reducing the risk of chronic diseases (Arya & Mishra, 2013; Saraca et al., 2020; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Annam et al., 2024; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Vitamins

Vitamins are essential micronutrients that play a crucial role in maintaining various bodily functions. They are organic compounds that the body needs in small amounts to function properly. Vitamins are important for:

1. Energy production
2. Immune system function
3. Cell growth and development
4. Maintaining healthy skin, hair, and bones
5. Supporting various bodily processes

Vitamins can be obtained through a balanced diet, supplements, or fortified foods. A deficiency in vitamins can lead to various health problems, making it essential to consume adequate amounts (Saraca et al., 2020; Arimond et al., 2021; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Minerals

Minerals are essential micronutrients that play a crucial role in various bodily functions. They are inorganic elements that the body needs in small amounts to function properly. Minerals are important for:

1. Maintaining strong bones and teeth
2. Regulating fluid balance and electrolyte balance
3. Supporting nerve function and muscle contraction
4. Regulating heartbeat and blood pressure
5. Maintaining healthy skin, hair, and nails

There are two types of minerals:

1. Macrominerals (needed in larger amounts) such as Ca
2. lcium, Phosphorus, Magnesium, Potassium, Sodium
3. Trace minerals (needed in smaller amounts): Iron, Zinc, Iodine, Selenium, Copper

Minerals can be obtained through a balanced diet that includes a variety of whole foods, such as:

1. Fruits and vegetables
2. Whole grains
3. Nuts and seeds
4. Lean proteins
5. Dairy products

A deficiency in minerals can lead to various health problems, making it essential to consume adequate amounts (UNICEF, 2019; Saraca et al., 2020; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Ratmini et al., 2023; Shamsol & Fisol, 2023; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024). Some nutrients needed by the body and possible results of poor intake are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Some nutrients needed by the body and possible results of poor intake

No	Nutrients	Health use (function)	Possible indication of shortage in the body (consumption)
1	Biotin	Helps the ensure healthy skin, support nerves energy supply	Depression, memory problems, numbness
2	Carotenoids	Help in protection of cells against free radicals, promote lung and eye health, help immune system to function	Alcohol intake, smoking, low consumption of fruits and vegetables
3	Calcium	Help in maintaining healthy and strong bones, support nerve functioning	Numbness of feet and hands, tingling of hands and feet, muscle pain, spasms
4	Cysteine	Protects the cells from free radicals attack, helps in detoxification of heavy metals and chemicals, help in breaking down excess mucous present in the lung	frequent colds
5	Choline	Helps in protecting cell membrane functions, preventing homocysteine accumulation, assists communication of nerve-muscles	Fatigue, insomnia, nerve problems, fat accumulation
6	Copper	Helps in maintaining bones and connective tissues health, help in thyroid gland functions	Blood vessels rupturing, high sugar levels, high amount of cholesterol
7	Dietary fiber	Helps to aid bowel regularity, normal cholesterol and sugar levels, help in satiety, help in promoting weight loss	Constipation, high sugar levels, high cholesterol level, hemorrhoids
8	Flavonoids	Help in aiding to prevent excess inflammation, promote health of blood vessels, help in aiding the activity of vitamin C	Excess swelling after injury, easy bruising, frequent experience of cold, frequent nose bleeding, low intake vegetables and fruits
9	Iodine	Ensure proper thyroid functioning	Depression, goiter, poor academic performance, fatigue
10	Magnesium	Helps in preventing free radicals damage, help in strong bones	Insulin resistance and high sugar levels of the blood, reduced bone mineral density
11	Folic acid	Support cell making, support heart health, aid nerve functions	Depression, irritability, forgetfulness, insomnia, confusion

12	Manganese	Prevent free radical damage, help to keep bones strong and healthy	Insulin resistance, reduced bone mineral density, high blood sugar level
13	Glutamine	Help in maintaining intestinal tract, help in making glutathione, ensure acid-base balance, help in muscle mass maintenance	Intestinal dybiosis, frequent flu or cold
14	Zinc	Help in blood sugar level balance, support smell and taste functions	Frequent cold, depression, poor taste and smell detection
15	Vitamin D	Helps in keeping in bones, strong bones, and prevent inflammation	Thinning bones, frequent fracture, soft bones, bone deformities in kids, lack of exposure to sunlight
16	Vitamin E	Helps the cell against damage due to free radicals, protect skin from excess sunlight	Tingling or loss of arm sensation or hands or legs or feet; digestion problems
17	Vitamin C	Protect the cells against free radical attack, help in absorption iron from plant-based foods	Frequent colds, frequent infection, poor wound healing, lung-based problems
18	Phosphorus	Helps in bone and teeth making, and essential for making energy (production)	Weight loss, weakness, anxiety, increased incidence of hypertension
19	Protein	Helps in making healthy skin, nails, hair, and support functioning of immune system	Irritability, muscular weakness, confusion, diarrhea, heart problem, fatigue
20	Selenium	Protect cells against free radical, needed for making thyroid hormone	Weakness, pain in muscles, hair and skin discoloration, poor academic performance
21	Potassium	Maintain pH balance, lowering the risk of hypertension	Irritability, weakness; chronic diarrhea, confusion

Source: Mateljan (2010)

Unhealthy Foods: Empty calories

Empty calories refer to foods or beverages that provide energy but lack essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein. These foods are often high in:

1. Added sugars
2. Solid fats (saturated and trans fats)
3. Refined carbohydrates

Consuming excessive empty calories can lead to: Weight gain and obesity, Nutrient imbalances, Increased risk of chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease). Limiting empty calorie intake and focusing on nutrient-dense foods can help support overall health and well-being. Examples of empty calories. Here are some common examples of empty calorie sources:

1. Sugary drinks:

- Soda
- Sports drinks
- Energy drinks
- Fruit-flavored drinks

2. Processed snacks:

- Chips
- Crackers
- Cookies
- Puffed snacks

3. Fried foods:

- French fries
- Fried chicken
- Doughnuts
- Fried dough pastries

4. Baked goods:

- Cakes
- Pastries
- Muffins
- Cupcakes

5. Candy and sweets:

- Candy bars
- Gummies
- Lollipops

6. Refined grains:

- White bread
- Sugary cereals
- Processed pasta dishes

These foods are often high in calories, added sugars, and unhealthy fats, but low in essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein. Consuming excessive amounts of empty calories can lead to weight gain, nutrient deficiencies, and increased risk of chronic diseases (USDA, 2015; Vidya et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2021; Abonmai et al., 2022; Raouf et al., 2022).

Examples of Methods of Disrupting Food Deserts and Swamp's in schools

There are varieties of services or policies that are supposed to be combined in order to disrupt food deserts and food swamps, so that staff and students get healthy access to healthy foods for growth, development, and productivity.

Health education is an important method of providing healthy foods environment. Nutrition simply means to consume enough healthy foods (containing fuels, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients or relations) required for healthy life and growth. People who are informed about healthy eating pattern tend to behave healthier by consuming healthy foods and practicing healthy habits. Parents with considerable knowledge of healthy eating tend to influence their kids by sending them to schools along with healthy foods or money to purchase healthy foods at schools or nearby (Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya).

Improving food distribution systems is another factor that support healthy eating. Food systems certainly affect food accessibility. Unhealthy food access can be controlled by improving distribution systems, by taking measures. Measures include, creating healthy (mobile or permanent) markets near schools or in school premises, encouraging healthy small markets at schools, and other similar measures (Saraca et al., 2020; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Ways of controlling food deserts and food swamps in schools

Here are some ways to control food deserts and food swamps in schools. Controlling Food Deserts involves:

1. Improve School Meal Programs-Offer healthy and nutritious meals that meet dietary standards.
2. Increase Access to Fresh Produce-Provide fresh fruits and vegetables in school cafeterias, salad bars, or through farm-to-school programs.
3. Healthy Vending Options-Stock vending machines with healthy snacks and beverages.
4. Nutrition Education-Incorporate nutrition education into the curriculum to promote healthy eating habits.
5. Community Involvement-Engage parents, teachers, and the community in promoting healthy food options.

However, the tips for controlling food swamps include the followings:

1. Limit Unhealthy Food Options-Restrict or remove unhealthy food options from school vending machines, stores, and snack bars.
2. Healthy Fundraisers-Promote healthy fundraisers, such as selling fresh produce or baked goods made with wholesome ingredients.
3. Nutrition Standards-Establish nutrition standards for foods sold in schools, ensuring they meet dietary guidelines.
4. Marketing Restrictions-Limit or ban marketing of unhealthy foods in schools.
5. Promote Healthy Choices-Encourage healthy food choices through signage, posters, and promotional materials.

Additional Strategic tips include:

1. School Wellness Policies-Develop and implement school wellness policies that promote healthy eating and physical activity.
2. Food Service Training-Provide training for food service staff on preparing healthy meals and snacks.
3. Student Involvement-Engage students in meal planning and nutrition decision-making.
4. Partnerships-Collaborate with local farmers, food vendors, and community organizations to promote healthy food options.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation-Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school food programs and make improvements as needed.

By implementing these strategies, schools can help control food deserts and food swamps, promoting a healthier food environment for students (Battershy, 2019; Aimuson-Quampah et al., 2022; Michigan WIC Program, 2022; Sarkingobir & Miya, 2024).

Factors Encouraging Food Deserts and Food Swamps

The most appropriate way to look at the factors encouraging unhealthy food environments in schools is the view of Socioecological Model (SEM). SEM and it's comments or levels affecting healthy or unhealthy food environments in schools are delineated in Table 2.

Table 2: Declination of SEM and it's application in describing factors dealing with food environments

S/N	Component	Explanation
1	Intrapersonal factors	These factors at this level include, individual features such as knowledge, belief, and self-concept. The levels aforementioned factors direct the pendulum of acting towards healthy or unhealthy foods. School actors (students and teachers) with poor knowledge or health literacy will commit to unhealthy foods.
2	Interpersonal factors	These factors include, family, friends, peers, colleagues at school. People linked to other people who are irresponsibly consuming unhealthy foods are more prone to follow suit.
3	Institutional factors	These factors include the school factors. If canteen, cafeteria, markets, premises of the schools are dominated with unhealthy foods, the students and staff are more inclined to take them.
4	Community factors	This include the interactions of communities such as norms. Communities that are influenced by marketing to believe that empty calories are foods and part of diet are encouraged to engage in unhealthy food eating.

5	Public Policies	Policies are what the agencies or decision makers or government decided to do or avoid. Policies made by government encourage 6healthy or unhealthy eating. Because the governments get tax and other benefits from empty industries, they allowed the industries to perpetuate all-sorts of marketing such as use of social media, and successfully lobbied major part of the public to consider empty calories as part of our diet. Laws and policies that screen marketing strategies help to deescalate wide acceptance of empty calories. Providing healthy food markets, school farms, school garden, community garden, school feeding, and other related implementations will help to spared healthy eating behavior at schools or other environments.

Source: UNICEF (2024)

Conclusion

In conclusion, food deserts and swamps in schools have significant implications for students' health, well-being, and academic performance. To create a healthier and more supportive learning environment, it is essential to address these issues through a comprehensive approach that includes improving food options, promoting nutrition education, and implementing policies that support healthy eating habits. By working together, schools, communities, and policymakers can help ensure that students have access to the nutritious food they need to thrive academically, physically, and emotionally.

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