



For Immediate Release

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Black-ish actress Marsai Martin wants School Lunch for All (Photo Credit: Topshelf Junior).

Marsai Martin Wants Free School Meals for All K-12 Students

The *Black-ish* star, Urban School Food Alliance, and Student Voice are encouraging people to sign the

School Lunch for All petition on Change.org to support the movement

(New York, NY) -- For millions of students across the country, school-provided lunches are the only meals they are guaranteed each day. Even though meals are often subsidized at a federal level, a staggering number of students are still unable to pay for those meals, sometimes causing their families to go into debt. *Black-ish* star **Marsai Martin**, along with school nutrition leaders, **Urban School Food Alliance**, and the national student-led coalition, **Student Voice** are committed to changing this unfortunate reality.

School Lunch for All is a national campaign led by **The Soze Agency** and **Galaxy Gives** to ensure that school meals are provided, free of charge, to every K-12 student in America. To kick off the campaign, School Lunch for All is launching a Change.org petition which will put pressure on several legislative leaders including, the United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, reallocated COVID-19 relief funds to ensure that all students have access to free meals whenever doors reopen for the 2020-21 academic year.

"With all the things that kids have to worry about while attending school, I believe a healthy lunch shouldn't be one of them," says *Black-ish* actor Marsai Martin. "Kids should be able to focus on learning while at school, not whether or not they have enough money to eat."

[DOWNLOAD MARSAI'S FULL 'SCHOOL LUNCH FOR ALL' VIDEO HERE](#)

The petition was penned by Dwight Howard, grandfather of then-kindergartener Anya Howard who was refused a hot lunch at her Indiana school last year, and called out in front of her peers when it was discovered she did not have enough money on her account to cover the cost. Anya's story made national headlines and is just one example of why school nutrition reform is so important.

Katie Wilson, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Urban School Food Alliance, one of the collaborating organizations on the School Lunch for All initiative, reiterates the importance of school meal equity for the success of students.

"The time has come to stop putting the burden of family income in exchange for school meals on the shoulders of our children," says Dr. Wilson. "When they come to school, children can receive a bus ride, textbooks, the most updated technology, science labs, and great learning opportunities as part of the school day. Only when it comes to school meals do we ask them for information about their family income. The science is clear, a well-nourished child has a much better chance at success in the classroom and on the athletic field, so why do we tie the educational tool that school meals bring to the table to family income? School meals provide a benefit to local economies and America's farmers, so let's join together and make sure they also provide a benefit to the children they were meant to serve. Make school meals a Universal free program. The money saved in administrative paperwork can be reinvested in the quality of the

food and health and wellbeing of our nation's children can be reinvested in our future. The time is now to invest in our children, it is the right thing to do."

"As students, we believe that everyone has the right not to go hungry at school," says partner organization Student Voice's Director of Communications, Jenna Yuan. "Especially in a time of growing economic uncertainty because of COVID-19, ensuring that all students have access to free, nutritious school lunches must be a priority for lawmakers and educators. Without our basic needs like food met, it becomes impossible for us as students to effectively learn. Because so many low-income students and students of color rely on school lunch, sometimes as their primary source of food for the whole day, free school lunch is a critical social support both within our educational system and for families struggling economically. To allow us to achieve our potential, students must have access to free school lunches for all without fear of debt."

We believe that no student should go hungry at school and that no child or family should experience financial strain, public shame, or debt in exchange for those meals.

'SCHOOL LUNCH FOR ALL' CHANGE.ORG PETITION

#SchoolLunchForAll

Website: <https://www.schoollunchforall.org>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/schoollunchforall/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/endlunchdebt>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/schoollunchforall>



About Urban School Food Alliance

The Urban School Food Alliance was created by school food professionals in 2012 to address the unique needs of the nation's largest school districts. The members of the Alliance strive to provide fresh, healthy and delicious meals to students. We work collectively on policy, share best practices, and leverage purchasing power to drive food quality up and costs down, all while incorporating sound environmental practices. The Alliance includes 12 of the largest school districts in the country and work collectively for the health and well-being of the students we serve.

Website: <https://www.urbanschoolfoodalliance.org>

Student Voice

About Student Voice

Student Voice is a by-students, for-students 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in all 50 states to equip students as storytellers, organizers and institutional partners who advocate for student-driven solutions to educational inequity. Through direct civic action, Student Voice helps students hold their schools and surrounding communities accountable to the Student Bill of Rights and prepares them to become lifelong agents of social and political change. For more information about Student Voice, visit our website at [StuVoice.org](https://www.stuvoice.org) and follow @Stu_Voice and #StuVoice on social media.

Website: <https://www.stuvoice.org>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/stu_voice/

Twitter: https://twitter.com/stu_voice



About The Soze Agency

The Soze Agency is a social impact creative agency made up of entrepreneurs, strategists, artists, activists, and storytellers. Guided by three core values: compassion, authenticity, and equity, the agency builds and supports movements, creates strategic campaigns, and produces impactful creative content and immersive public events and experiences. The Soze Agency method is to use our proximity to issues to tell authentic stories that shape culture and manifest change.

Website: <https://www.wearesoze.com>



About Galaxy Gives

Galaxy Gives' mission is to take down barriers created by structural poverty, oppression, and racism in order to maximize opportunity, fairness, and human flourishing for all. Galaxy Gives supports organizations that aim to fight mass incarceration and the criminalization of poverty in America.

Website: <http://www.galaxygives.com>