



yale college council

Policy Proposal

Project Title: Raise Meal Vouchers for Students Staying on Campus During Breaks

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Problem:

As dining halls are closed for November and Spring Recess, currently, qualifying students remaining on campus over breaks are provided \$30 Uber Eats meal vouchers daily. While we appreciate the administration's efforts to subsidize this cost, there is a core problem with this program: \$30 is insufficient.

For high-need and international students—many of whom cannot afford to return home during these periods—appropriating only \$30 a day per voucher means students are forced into difficult choices: choosing between having to stretch meals over several days or buying cheap, unhealthy, and unsubstantial dishes. On a daily basis, students must decide between purchasing a more substantial meal early in the day and facing hunger later, or buying smaller, less nutritious items to make the funds last. This daily struggle to balance hunger and financial constraints undermines the very essence of the care and community that Yale claims to uphold.

High-need and international students often have no viable alternatives. While many of their peers return to family homes during breaks, these students are left behind, expected to navigate a system that offers insufficient resources to meet even their most basic needs: hunger. These students are forced into seeking strategies—such as rationing food or pooling funds with other students—to survive on a campus that feels increasingly

isolating during breaks. This leaves students feeling neglected and desperate as they must “make due” with the insufficient support of the University.

Solution:

The current \$30 value is insufficient to cover the cost of three meals per day in New Haven. We propose raising the daily voucher amount to **\$60**, which more accurately reflects the cost of 3 meals a day.

This change would enable students to better budget their food needs—allowing them to purchase breakfast, lunch, and dinner separately—thus reducing food insecurity and promoting well-being. This increase and change to the voucher system will help alleviate the burden on high-need and international students who are financially constrained and cannot leave campus during breaks.

Testimonies:

- “While I appreciate the effort to give us money at all, I do think \$30 doesn't reflect the rising cost of food prices due to inflation as well as the delivery costs themselves. Me and my friends have had to arrange our sleep schedules so we can skip a meal and afford other ones (which can make conditions like diabetes and iron deficiency worse) or buy the most food for the least amount of money (which does tend to be unhealthy).”
- “30 is not enough for three meals a day in New Haven and does not match the price of three dining hall meals a day.”
- “It reflects a great deal of what the university thinks we are worth when they only provide \$30 a day, one-time use, for 3 meals. As an FGLI student, and in conversation with my FGLI international friends, it is draining and upsetting to constantly have to uphold the university to care about our needs, especially when it comes to food. We need to eat and during breaks, the dining halls are closed.