The case for cheaper organic lunches

The $7.56 solution. Why better school lunches are cheaper than you think? Everybody says organic school launches are expensive. And what if I showed you that they're actually cheaper then what we're doing right now?

Here's the math that changes everything. Right now, the National School Lunch Program serves over 4.6 billion lunch as a year that cost an average of $3.74 a meal.

But here's the breakdown. Only $1.20 to $2 actually goes to food. The rest goes overhead, labor, administration.

Hidden costs of processed school food

For that $ 1. 20, kids are getting processed chicken nuggets with veterinary drugs. Bread with glyphosate levels that's 25,000 times higher than what's safe.

Milk in UHT packaging that strips nutrients, fruit cocktails and syrup with heavy metals, vegetables that are 80 to 95% depleted of nutrients. They're not getting meals, they're getting chemical delivery systems shaped like food.

But we're paying way more than $3.74 a meal because we are paying it in different places. Healthcare costs, childhood obesity treatments, type 2 diabetes in kids unheard of 30 years ago.

Allergy treatments. EpiPens. Behavioral therapy for aggression and ADHD. Treatment for learning disabilities. Cancer treatments, yes, in children. Then there's the education costs, special services, behavioral intervention programs.

Health and education savings from better nutrition

We get lower test scores, so it means less funding. Teacher time, managing these disruptions instead of teaching. And there is the social costs. Juvenile justice system, mental health, crisis intervention, lost productivity as adults.

The healthcare system overload. When you add it all up, cheap food is incredibly expensive. Now let's talk about $7.56 per meal for organic locally sourced food.

That's an increase of about four dollars a meal, or roughly $750 per student per school year. Sounds like a lot, I know. But think about the savings, fewer doctor visits, medications, reduced special ed needs, better attendance, more state funding because we get better test scores, More funding, less behavioral intervention.

Fewer school nurses are needed. Prevention of chronic diseases. That's a lifetime of savings. Multiple studies show that for every dollar invested in proper nutrition for kids, we save five to $10 in healthcare costs and educational costs later.

Examples of successful organic school programs

Places around are already reporting this, around the country. Boulder, Colorado, centralized organic kitchen serving multiple schools. Better student performance, lower absenteeism, high parent satisfaction.

California school districts, they have three districts that are now 100% organic. One district has 62 schools and they're at 60% Organic. Students actually want to eat food lunch.

Food waste has decreased because the food tastes better. New Mexico, 800 organic meals daily for 10 years. Farm to school garden programs, Students learn culinary skills, community economic boosts that support local farms.

So the question is, can we afford organic school lunches? The question, is can afford not to?

Why investing in kids' food pays off

Right now we're spending 90 billion subsidizing chemical agriculture, trillions on healthcare for preventable diseases, billions on special education, incalculable amounts on lost human potential.

For a fraction of that, we could give every kid nutrient dense food. Support local organic farmers. Build a food system that heals. Create the healthiest, most productive generation in history.

Which one sounds more expensive to you? Show your school board this math because investing in our kids' health isn't expensive. It's the smartest investment we could possibly make.