

## ADVOCATING FOR FOOD EQUITY by GABBY LEVET

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Food Justice Network released our Policy Platform and launched the Weeks of Action as the City's budget planning process ramped up. Our coalition called on City Council to invest in food equity priorities and policies as they decided which programs get funded for the next year. The goal was to recommend strategic values, funding priorities, and concrete goals for City departments to deepen their capacity for food equity.

Initially, FJN elevated our Healthy School Foods priorities as part of a larger policy platform release requested by City Council. We called upon City Council and the School Board for direct investment in CCS' Nutrition Department for school meal transformation and infrastructure improvements. Youth leaders and Community Advocates showed up at a joint City Council/School Board budget meeting to share their vision for healthy school meals! After week one, we pressed on with advocacy towards the broader policy platform. Partners and community members raised awareness to City leadership via social media and email campaigns.

Our platform focuses on igniting systemic change and collective movements, highlighting our core Food Equity Initiative action areas. These top priorities include:

- The Power to Grow: Advancing Affordable Housing & Urban Agriculture
- The Right to Good Food: Advancing Transportation and Neighborhood Food Access
- Inspire Youth Choice: Advancing Healthy School Foods
- Food Equity and Justice: Supporting Systemic Change & Collective Movements
- Build Community Wealth: Advancing Neighborhood Food Access & Markets
- Restore Earth & Climate and Environmental Justice: Advancing Environmental and Climate Justice

As we move into the next phase of budget planning, the Food Justice Network continues to press on in our collective goal of a healthy and just food system, advocating for the necessary policies and investments to make systemic shifts. We are grateful for the outpouring of support and collective movement thus far. Stay tuned for ways to support our continued advocacy in the budget planning process and beyond!!