



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
12234

Kathleen R. DeCataldo, Esq.
Assistant Commissioner
Office of Student Support Services
89 Washington Avenue, Room 318M EB
Phone: (518) 486-6090
E-mail: kathleen.decataldo@nysed.gov; Web: www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/

Date: June 24, 2020

To: Superintendents of Public School Districts and BOCES District Superintendents

From: Kathleen R. DeCataldo

Subject: Feeding Children in Need and Child Care for Essential Workers During the Summer

As schools closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was critical that school districts provide meals to all students and particularly to students who rely on the two meals a day provided in school when school is open.

This urgent need will continue through the summer months. Although historically, many school districts have not provided meals during the summer, due to the COVID -19 pandemic, this is reminder that the Governor's office has directed that "meal programs and child care for essential employees" be continued pursuant to [Executive Order 202.28](#).¹

School districts must assure that there are meals available to low-income children during this summer. School districts must work with their communities, other community based Summer Food Service Program providers and county feeding organizations (food banks, food pantries, Red Cross, etc.) to identify resources to address the needs of all children in their community and, particularly, low-income children. Work with your community partners for distribution of food to children by instituting meal pick-up and delivery options. Efforts should also be made minimize the distance families are forced travel to access these options. Information regarding your regional food bank or emergency relief organization can be found at [Regional Food Bank](#) and [Emergency Relief Organization](#).

If there is no access to food for children in your community during the summer months, the school district must step in to fill this critical need.

The deadline for [new applications](#) to become a sponsor of a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) has been extended to June 30. Applications will be reviewed and given final approval by the Office

¹See also, [Governor Andrew Cuomo Press Release Extending Meals and Childcare through Summer May 21, 2020](#); accessed 06-24-2020.

of Child Nutrition. Child Nutrition staff are available to provide sponsors technical assistance and guidance during the application process and throughout the summer.

Notification of SFSP Site and Meal Availability

Regardless of whether the school district is providing a SFSP, every school district is responsible to ensure that information regarding meal accessibility is provided in ways ensured to reach families in need in their identified preferred language. School districts must cooperate with SFSP sponsors to distribute materials and provide outreach to inform families of the availability and location of free SFSP meals for students over the summer.

Families can be provided the following information to quickly and easily find summer meals near them.

Text: “food” or “comida” to 877-877

Call: 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 211

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids>

www.summermealsny.org

If school districts are not able to provide access to meals for their free and reduced price lunch population for any reason, and there are no other access to meals available, the school district must notify the State Education Department at CNCOVID@nysed.gov.

Districts are also expected to continue the arrangements previously made to provide child care for essential workers in accord with their currently submitted plan. If a district’s plan needs to be revised to provide alternative child care during the summer, districts must resubmit their updated plans to the State Education Department by July 3, 2020. Please contact the State Education Department at COVID19@nysed.gov if your plan must be resubmitted.