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# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

*Educating the Whole Child*

## \*IMPORTANT NOTICE\* Meals for Children During Unanticipated School Closure as a Result of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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March 12, 2020

## School Nutrition

### SCHOOL NUTRITION AND DISTRICT OPERATIONS

### Meals for Children During Unanticipated School Closure as a Result of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

School Nutrition Administrators:

The Department of Public Instruction received a waiver from the US Department of Agriculture today to enable Local Education Agency's (LEAs) and community organizations, with permanent agreements with the NCDPI to participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO), to offer reimbursable meals to eligible children in households impacted by unanticipated school closures. Strategies to distribute meals, that promote social distancing in a non-congregate setting, will be determined at the local level.

For areas where at least 50% of children are economically disadvantaged, also known as "area eligible," the following scenarios may be possible:

- Parents or household members may pick up meals;
- Volunteers and community agencies may assist in distribution of meals;
- LEAs may choose to use transportation routes and yellow school buses to distribute meals;
- Law enforcement and emergency management officials may distribute meals; and

- Other options to pick up or distribute meals as determined by local authorities.

For areas that are not “area eligible,” LEAs and community organizations may take a similar approach, but they will be only be reimbursed for meals provided to children in households that qualify for free or reduced-price meal benefits.

More information will be forthcoming in the next few days that may help with decision-making around distribution of meals to students and maintaining a safe School Nutrition environment. Specifically, we will be distributing:

- An agreement amendment to describe the requirements of non-congregate meal service to children;
- A “Best Practices” document to address potential food safety and other issues;
- A preliminary Q/A document based on questions received by the School Nutrition Division; and
- Other resources as available.

For questions, contact the NC Department of Public Instruction at (919) 807-3505 of 3506.

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