



Resources to Help You Help Them!

SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

Strategies to Increase Meal Participation

Accessibility	Awareness	Adaptability
<p>Diversify Your Distribution: Use school buses or food trucks to drop off meals at bus stops or homes, or find local partners with trucks for distribution.</p>	<p>Communicate with Stakeholders: Our template letters help inform families, principals, and superintendents of the importance and availability of meals.</p>	<p>Create Variety with Temperature: Offer a hot meal or hot chocolate milk at service, even if the rest of the meal contains cold menu items.</p>
<p>Extend Meal Service: Offer extended meal service times to increase accessibility and make social distancing easier.</p>	<p>PSAs and Social Media: Use our sample scripts and social media posts to ensure that students and families know how to access meals.</p>	<p>Recipes and How-To Videos: For take-home meal boxes, share a 1-pager or video of suggested recipes like fruit & yogurt smoothies using box contents.</p>
<p>One-Stop Shop: Partner with local food banks or organizations that provide groceries for families. Partner organizations help with outreach, too!</p>	<p>Local Partners Can Help: Anti-hunger organizations, government officials, pediatricians, and other trusted messengers can help spread the word.</p>	<p>Innovative Packaging: Bento boxes or multi-compartment trays create interactive meals like build-your-own parfaits, walking tacos, or pizza kits.</p>
<p>Combined Celebrations: Special themed events like book bag giveaways or festive school orientation events can be combined with meal service.</p>	<p>Build Hype with Events: Hosting monthly themed events can promote meal availability and incentivize participation.</p>	<p>Safe Delicious Food: Provide a food safety information sheet to help families store and reheat foods properly for the best quality and safety.</p>
<p>Try Different Serving Locations: Alternate spaces like a school courtyard or playground can be used for visible, accessible meal service. Streamlined serving lines can speed up meal service too.</p>	<p>Live Cooking Demos: Enlist school chefs or administrators to cook a featured menu item on Facebook Live or other social media platforms. Remember to share meal service info.</p>	<p>Eat with Your Eyes: Make your menu come to life by sharing photos, a video, or a TikTok of your summer meals menu offerings.</p>
<p>Open More Sites: In addition to serving at schools, establish sites in the community with local partners like Boys & Girls Clubs, recreation centers, faith-based organizations, and housing developments.</p>	<p>Cross-Promotion: Food suppliers, vendors, or other organizations offer free promotional items, like school supplies or activity kits, during meal service times.</p>	<p>Picture Pages for Staff: Staff can serve meals easily with visual instructions showing service expectations and food safety best practices.</p>
<p>Provide a Hot Meal: Try offering hot meals, like pizza on Fridays, when families are picking up meals for the week.</p>	<p>Banner Ads: Post a banner ad on virtual learning platforms and district websites to advertise menus, meal service times, featured recipes, and more!</p>	<p>Find New Revenue Streams: Consider offering a family meal kit, birthday bundles, or prepackaged à la carte items for purchase at meal pick-up.</p>

Be sure to check with your State Agency before implementing any changes to your program.

