

Child Nutrition Programs and the COVID pandemic

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
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Child Nutrition

What are **USDA School Meal Programs**?

USDA= United States Department of Agriculture

- NSLP: National School Lunch Program
- SBP: School Breakfast Program
- Afterschool Snack Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- At-Risk Afterschool Program

What are USDA Community Nutrition Programs?

USDA= United States Department of Agriculture

- CACFP: Child and Adult Care Food Program
- SFSP: Summer Food Service Program

Why are Child Nutrition Programs important?

- Child Nutrition Programs help fight hunger and obesity by reimbursing organizations such as schools, childcare centers, and after-school programs for providing healthy meal to children.
- Congregate meals, with nutritional requirements provide immediate nutritional support AND support lifetime healthy habits
- Pre-pandemic, our programs serve nearly 156 million meals/year

What happened with school meal programs during the pandemic?

March – August 2020

- WA schools and OSPI took immediate action
- USDA waivers provided flexibility
 - Meals free of charge for all
 - Non-congregate meals
- Focus on providing nutritional support to students



2020 Free Meals for Students During COVID-19



Lake Washington School District posted a video to playlist Stories from our Schools.

April 6 · 🌐

A big thanks to our nutrition services and transportation staff. Because of their commitment and service, LWSD has served over 11,000 meals to our students since March 16!

As a friendly reminder, LWSD will continue to provide FREE breakfast and lunch at 30 locations during spring break. Pre-order your meal the day before starting at 2 p.m. until 8 a.m. on the day of pick up. Learn more: www.lwsd.org/meals

👍❤️ 221

7 Comments 21 Shares

🔗 Share



Kent School District

Yesterday at 10:15 AM · 🌐

New free meals location starting tomorrow: Emerald Park Elementary School

Shoutout to our incredible Nutrition Services and Transportation teams for making sure our students continue to have access to meals during remote learning! Learn more and find a meal pick-up location near you at <https://www.kent.k12.wa.us/Meals>



👍❤️ 34

6 Comments 6 Shares

What happened with school meal programs during the pandemic? School Year 20-21

- USDA waivers provided flexibility:
 - Meals Free of Charge for All
 - Non-congregate
 - Multiple Meals at a time

- Supply Chain Issues
 - Worked closely with WA State Dairy Council
 - Worked with Distributors
 - Purchased individual serving size items



Edmonds School District Food and Nutrition Services is at Edmonds School District.

2 hrs · Mountlake Terrace, WA · 📍

It is hard to tell the time of day in this smoke but it is MEALTIME! Come pick up your meals!

Full list of times and locations is on the website. www.edmonds.wednet.edu



Ferndale Schools

September 14 at 8:30 AM · 📍

Remember to pick up school meals this Wednesday, September 16th!

A 10-meal box (5 complete breakfasts/5 complete lunches) will be distributed as follows:

Wednesday mornings from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the following locations:

- Beach School
- Central Elementary School
- Custer Elementary School
- Cascadia Elementary School
- Skyline Elementary School
- Eagleridge/Horizon Campus (near front door of Eagleridge)
- North Bellingham Learning Center
- Vista Middle School
- Ferndale High School

Wednesday evenings from 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM at the following locations:

- Ferndale High School
- Custer Elementary School
- North Bellingham Learning Center

Find more information here:

<https://www.ferndalesd.org/reopening-plan/meal-distribution>



Meal Distribution



Meal Distribu



What happened with school meal programs during the pandemic? School Year 21-22

- USDA waivers allowed all students to have access to meals free of charge.

MODIFYING SCHOOL SPACES DURING MEALTIMES

to Reduce Spread of COVID-19

As a K-12 school administrator, you can work with teachers, building managers, school nutrition staff, and custodians to modify mealtime school spaces to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. This tool can help you modify mealtime spaces to apply mitigation measures listed in [Operating Schools during COVID-19: CDC's Considerations](#). Examples are provided for eating meals in the cafeteria, classroom, and outdoor areas; however, you can apply the strategies in this document to other spaces, such as the gymnasium or auditorium.

In addition to modifying the physical space, modify procedures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission during meal service, such as ensuring proper [handwashing or use of hand sanitizer](#) before and after eating, [staggering mealtimes for class cohorts](#), and expanding [disinfection or sanitization practices](#) to include makeshift food surfaces (such as desks) between each use. For more complete guidance on school meal distribution procedures, see [Safely Distributing School Meals during COVID-19](#).

7 Ways You Can Make School Spaces Safer for Mealtimes

1. Masks

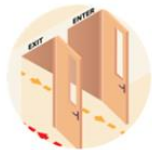
- **Provide a safe way for students to store their masks while eating.** Inexpensive and breathable containers, such as paper bags, can be provided for students.



- **Ensure students remove and replace their masks properly before and after mealtimes.** See additional guidance [mask use](#).

2. Physical distancing

- **Mark different doors for entering and exiting.** If your mealtime space has more than one door, designate one to be the entrance and one to be the exit. Clearly label them with signs or tape so that walking patterns are in one direction through the doors. If you only have one door, have a plan for students to take turns and mark waiting lines as necessary. Exterior doors that open to the outdoors should also be designated and labeled as entrances or exits; however, if there is an emergency, policies to exit the nearest door should remain in place. Ensure that doors have signage with instructions to wear a mask, stay 6 feet apart, and [wash hands](#).



- **Mark walking paths.** Designate walking paths or provide physical guides on floors and signs on walls to ensure students remain at least 6 feet apart. Clearly label directional routes throughout the mealtime space and in the hallways to and from the space. Consider making these paths one way for students when entering and exiting the room, ensuring accessibility for students and staff with disabilities. For outdoor spaces, you can use marking paint on grass and paved surfaces.



- **Designate a delivery path for teachers and staff delivering lunches to other mealtime spaces so students can avoid the use of serving lines or mark waiting spots in the serving lines that are at least 6 feet apart.** Schools should consider methods of food delivery to students during mealtimes whenever possible. A one-way walking path should be designated for nutrition staff who will be delivering food to students. However, when food delivery is not possible, students should keep a physical distance of at least 6 feet when waiting in meal serving lines. Tape lines on the cafeteria floor or use marking paint on the grass or pavement when outdoors to show students where to stand to maintain an appropriate distance from one another.



Getting Meals to Quarantined Students – A Guide

Students who are quarantining due to possible COVID-19 exposure or illness are eligible to receive school meals.

Ways this can happen:

1. **District Provides Meals** - The District ensures quarantined students have access to school meals through meal delivery or pick-up. This approach best supports students and should be used if feasible.
2. **Local Governments/Community Food Banks/Community Based Organizations provide meals** - If the district cannot facilitate getting meals to quarantined students, consider partnering with your local government, a local food bank and/or other Community Based Organization (CBO) to ensure students have access to food. This requires families to voluntarily release information.
3. **Provide Information to Families** – Direct families of quarantined students to local food resources.

Resources that may be helpful to share with families.

- [FoodLifeLine Food Map \(Statewide\)](#)
- [Northwest Harvest Food Map \(Statewide\)](#)
- [WA 211 \(Statewide\)](#)
- [2nd Harvest Food Map \(Eastside of State\)](#)

School districts are not required to deliver meals to quarantined students. However, many students rely on school meals and we encourage district leaders to consider all options available to provide nutritional support to these students.

This guide was created to assist district leaders to better understand available options, as well as the applicable laws and regulations around serving meals to quarantined students.

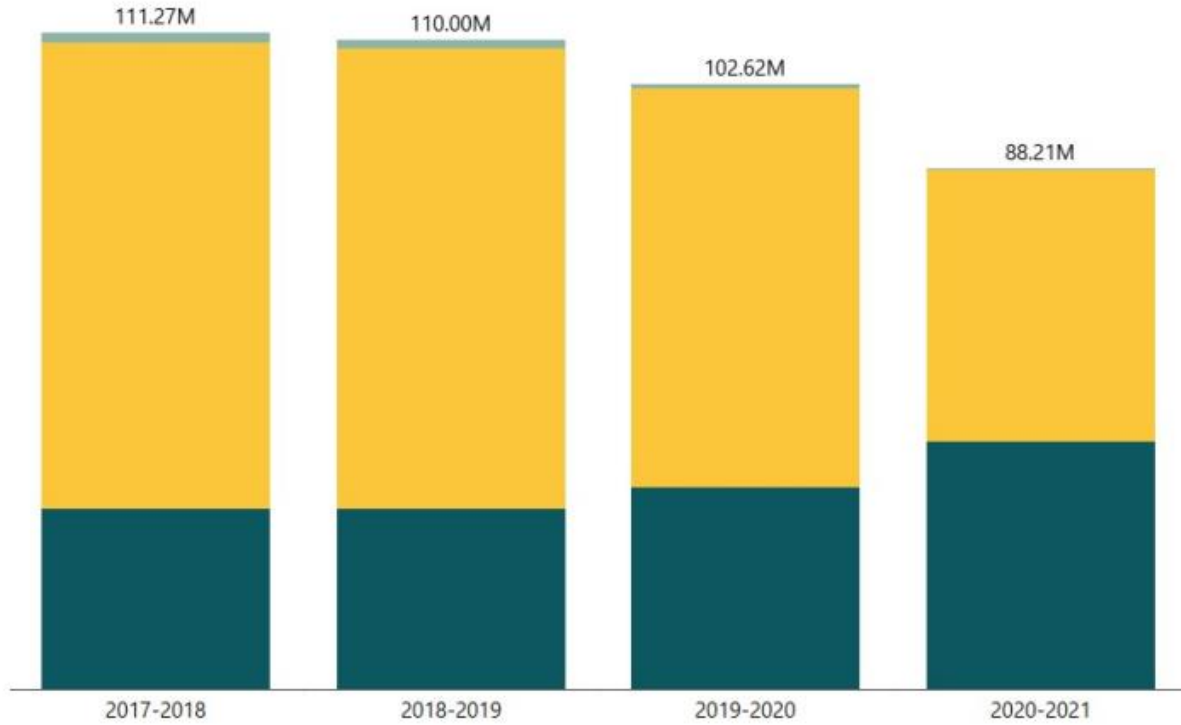
Total Meals and Snacks Served

September - May

Programs include NSLP, SBP, SSO and SFSP

Meals and snacks include all snacks, breakfast, and lunch

Meal
Snack
Lunch
Breakfast



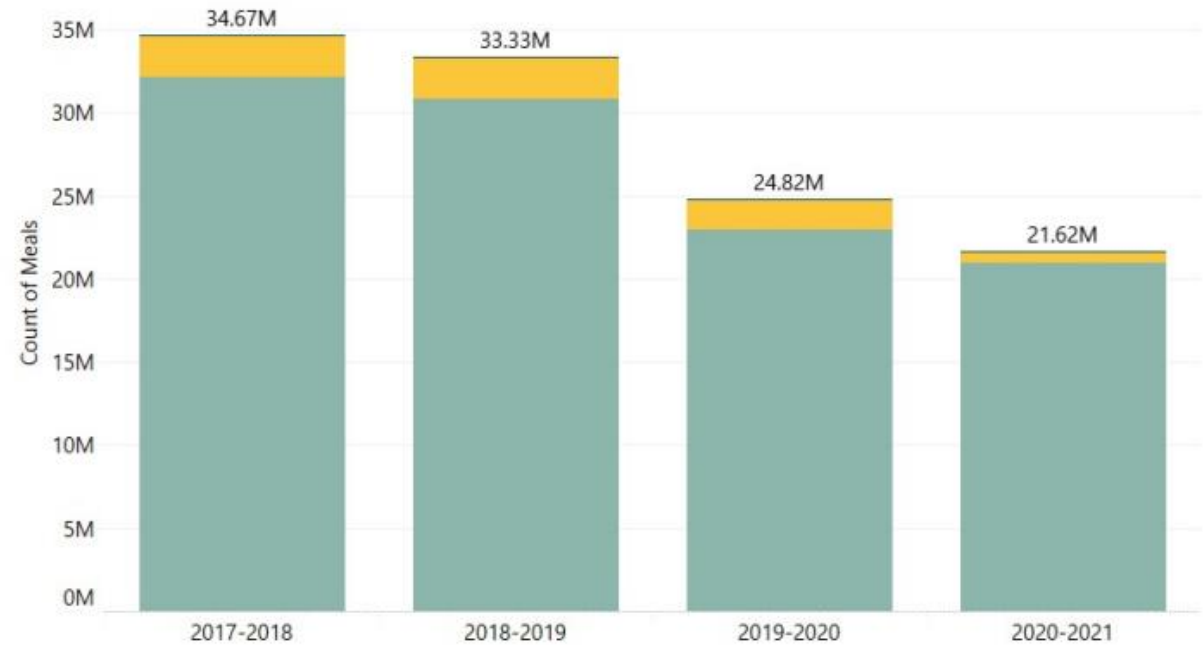
CACFP Meals and Snacks Served

September - August

Programs include Family Day Care Homes, Childcare Centers, and Adult Care

Meals and snacks include all snacks, breakfast, lunch, and supper

Meal Type
Emergency Shelter Meals
At-Risk Meals
Standard Meals



What happened with child nutrition programs during the pandemic?

- Additional supports to program operators
 - Emergency Operating Costs – federal
 - Supply Chain Assistance Funds – federal
 - ESSER Funds - federal / state
 - Additional USDA Foods - federal

What happened with child nutrition programs during the pandemic?

➤ Additional supports for children

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) is Back!

Get money for meals missed by students at school this school year.

There is no need to apply for P-EBT. Eligible families will get their P-EBT card in the mail automatically.

What do you need to do? It's easy – just make sure your address is up to date with us!



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Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services
Transforming lives

Summer: \$231.14M

During 20 - 21
P-EBT supported over
650K Students
By providing
\$910 Million
To purchase food
while sites were closed

School Year: \$680.22M

What we learned!

- Families rely on school / child care meals!
- Frequent and clear communication!
- Swift action is needed!
- Coordination to support meal providers!

What's happening currently with Child Nutrition Programs SY22-23?

- Return to “normal” operations
- USDA support of ongoing supply chain issues
- State legislative support:
 - Elimination of the reduced price co-pay for all grades
 - Financial support of the Community Eligibility Program

More Information and Resources



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Child Nutrition

Child Nutrition assists school districts and other institutions in providing quality nutrition programs that promote life-long healthful living while providing nutritious meals each day that prepare children for learning. Our [programs guide](#) gives an overview of the programs offered and the number of children served in Washington.

If you would like additional information about operating Child Nutrition Programs during unanticipated closures, please visit [COVID-19 Nutrition & Meals Guidance](#) web page.

Important Updates

[Summary of USDA Proposed Changes \(PDF\)-January 2020](#)

[NSLP/ SBP Communications and Updates](#)

<https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/child-nutrition>

Questions?





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