



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indiana Department of Education Encourages Participation in Summer Meals Program *Program Served Millions of Additional Meals in 2020*

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) encourages schools and qualified community organizations to participate in the 2021 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), following strong program growth in 2020.

"I'm thankful for the many Hoosiers who are working hard through the Summer Food Service Program to make sure Indiana's most vulnerable children don't go hungry," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "I encourage all eligible schools and local organizations to keep the momentum rolling by participating in this program to serve your communities."

The SFSP provides nutritious meals to children ages 18 and under in the summer when school is out of session. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved waivers last year allowing organizations to continue the SFSP beyond the summer and through the 2020-2021 school year. That led the SFSP program to grow dramatically in 2020 – with over 16 million meals served at 976 sites through October 2020 (the most recent data available).

In summer 2020 alone, sponsoring organization served about 5.5 million additional meals at about 400 additional sites across Indiana compared to 2019:

- June/July 2019 – 2.5 million meals at more than 1,300 meal sites throughout Indiana.
- June/July 2020 – 8 million meals at more than 1,700 meal sites throughout Indiana.

Created in 1968, the SFSP is funded and operated by the USDA and administered by the states. Participating organizations must adhere to all USDA regulations. The program is funded through a reimbursement based on the number of meals served to eligible participants. Any student ages 18 or under is eligible to receive meals through the SFSP by visiting a meal site.

Participating sponsors – including eligible school corporations, local governments and qualified non-profit agencies – are encouraged to continue their meal service for summer 2021 to accommodate need in their communities. They're also encouraged to consider expanding operations to areas where access to food and transportation may be limited to ensure continuous meal service to all low-income children.

IDOE will host multiple required webinars for new and returning sponsors. More information is available [here](#). To apply, sponsors must submit their application by April 30 to [Tina Skinner at IDOE](#).

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Media Contact:

Holly Lawson
Indiana Department of Education
Phone: 317.232.0536
Email: hlawson2@doe.in.gov



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