Feeding our Children: Best Practices and Challenges for Children’s Meal Sites During COVID-19 School Closures

April 8, 2020
Strategies for increasing participation

- Communicate: across traditional and social platforms.
- Learnings from peers: successes and challenges.
- Eos grant: up to $10,000/district.
Setting the Stage - Program Details

- Children receive **2 free meals/day** (bagged breakfast and bagged lunch). Children or parents/guardians can take both meals at once.

- **On Fridays, families can pick up 6 meals** to cover both a breakfast and a lunch on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

- No sign ups, rosters or names required. No questions asked.

- **Children do not need to be present for parents/guardians to pick up the meals.**

- Meals are available **to all children ages 0-21 SSO or 0-18 SFSP**, babies and preschool-aged children can also receive meals.

- **All children are welcome** regardless of town of residence or school attended, this is a community-wide meals program.

- All sites encourage safe social distancing.

- A district contact should be identified for anyone who cannot leave their home to collect a meal.

- Special needs students and homeless students require extra measures.

*All points taken from DESE communication to districts*
Post on your school’s outside welcome board.
Send emails to families.
Robocalls and texts.
Prepare a set of flyers – see Barnstable examples.
  • Frequency of message.
  • Multilingual as appropriate.
  • Deliver them to doorsteps (Boston did this).
  • Link to one of them on your website.
District & school websites – include a pop-up on the home page.
  • Very few websites have easy to find information.
City/Town websites
Audiences – childcare centers, youth centers.
Flyer #1 – The Basics

“Grab & Go” BREAKFAST and LUNCH
Meals for ANY child 18 years or younger

All children are welcome regardless of town of residence or school attended.
All meals will be offered in compliance with USDA standards and will be a “Grab and Go” option.
We will be providing both breakfast and lunch at the same time.

Monday - Friday 10 am - 1pm

Pick-Up Locations:
- Barnstable Intermediate School, 895 Falmouth Road, Hyannis
- Barnstable United Elementary School, 730 Osterville-W. Barnstable Rd, Marston Mills
- Hyannis West Elementary School, 549 West Main Street, Hyannis
- Hyannis Youth and Community Center, 141 Bassett Ln, Hyannis
Flyer #2 – Weekend Meals on Fridays

GRAB & GO
Breakfast & Lunches
for ALL Students in ALL Communities!

Added HOURS
Mon-Fri
10am - 1pm
4pm - 6pm

PICK-UP LOCATIONS:
BIS
BUES
HyWest
HYCC

NOTE: Fridays we will be handing out 3 breakfast and 3 lunches for each student for the weekend.
GRAB & GO
Breakfast and Lunches
Bus Stop Locations/Times

Starting Friday
March 20th

Along with the pick-up locations at BIS, BUES, HyWest, and HYCC, in an effort to reach more students, starting Friday, March 20, BPS will have the following meal drop off locations Monday-Friday for ALL students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUS STOP MONDAY - FRIDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROUTE A (Five Star bus)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>465 Sea Street (Sea Street Beach)</td>
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<tr>
<td>200 Main St (Health Offices)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ROUTE B (Five Star bus)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>367 Main Street (Town Hall)</td>
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<tr>
<td>767 Independence Dr (Village Green Apts. entrance)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ROUTE C (Five Star bus)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>852 Bease’s Way (Hyannis Elks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2095 Main Street (Old Marstons Mills Elementary)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ROUTE D (BPS bus)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>117 Turtleback Rd (Turtleback Triangle)</td>
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<td>168 Barnstable Road (Cromwell Court)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ROUTE E (BPS bus)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2377 Meetinghouse Way (Lombard Field)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3195 Rt. 6A (County Complex lot, behind Fire dept.)</td>
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Important Message

To Members of the Nauset Community

Governor Baker has closed all Massachusetts schools through Monday, May 4, 2020. Our staff is developing remote learning opportunities for your children for this extended period of time away from Nauset Public Schools and further information will be provided. It is worth noting the Governor has asked that the practice of “social distancing” is vitally important to stop the community spread of the COVID-19 virus. Stay at home as much as possible especially when feeling sick and stay away from large crowds during the closure whenever possible. We will post further information on social distancing and other COVID-19 information on our website.

For messages and information from the Superintendent CLICK HERE.

All elementary schools are providing meals for students. CLICK HERE for more information.

For your local Board of Health CLICK HERE.

For Links of Interest CLICK HERE

OK, got it.

Every district and school website should have a pop-up message every time a user clicks on the site
Chicopee Public Schools will remain closed and reopen no sooner than May 4, 2020 in compliance with Governor Bakers latest orders. All schools (except Szetela, Chicopee Academy, Belcher, Dupont, and Lambert-Lavoie), the police substation in Willimansett, the police substation in Chicopee Center, and 180 Broadway will be open for grab and go breakfast and lunch Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11AM-1PM. For more information visit the Food Service tab or Chicopee Fresh on Facebook.

Please note that there is NO PUBLIC ACCESS to Municipal buildings. Only staff will be allowed to access the buildings to continue day-to-day operations.
SCHOOL CLOSURE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

MPS has launched a website which will serve as a repository for all information and resources related to the current school closure and remote learning. This website will be updated frequently for the duration of the school closure.

Covid - 19 GRAB AND GO MEALS

Breakfast and lunch will be available as a "grab and go" style at the loop of Memorial School from 8-10 am and 11-1 pm, Monday - Friday for all kids, and one adult caregiver who comes with children. No need to get out of your car - just drive up!! Walkers are welcome as well.

Thank you.

MILFORD AREA RESOURCES DURING COVID-19
To: Monomoy Regional School District Recipients  
Subject: Free Grab and Go meal program expanded to add Sharks on Wheels

Dear Monomoy Families,

We hope you are taking advantage of our free meal program - it is open to all children from birth to age 18 in our community and provides daily breakfast and lunch for each child, free of charge. We are excited to announce an additional service to our meal program: Beginning Monday April 27, 2020, MRSD will be offering our Sharks on Wheels free meal delivery along with our Grab and Go free meal program.

• The Sharks on Wheels program is for families who are UNABLE to travel to one of the Grab and Go sites.
• Sharks on Wheels will be operating on Mondays and Thursdays. On Mondays, families will receive three breakfasts and three lunches per child, and on Thursdays, families will receive four breakfasts and four lunches per child, to cover the weekend.
• The existing Grab and Go free meal program is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Monomoy Regional Middle School (425 Crowell Road, Chatham) and Monomoy Regional High School (75 Oak St., Harwich), where families can pick up free breakfast and lunch for each child daily (plus weekend meals on Fridays).
• There is a signup form on our website that families must complete in order to arrange for delivery of meals via Sharks on Wheels. MRSD will not be able to schedule delivery until one form per child is submitted. Families need only submit the form once per child in order to sign up for the delivery program.
• The existing Grab and Go meal program will continue to be available to families.
• There will be no Grab and Go meal service Friday, April 10. On Thursday, April 9, families will be given four days’ worth of meals for each child.
• There will be no Grab and Go meal service Monday, April 20. On Friday, April 17, families will be given four days’ worth of meals for each child.
• Sharks on Wheels will begin Monday, April 27.

All social distancing guidelines will be followed!
If you have any questions about Sharks on Wheels or the Grab and Go meal program, please email meals@monomoy.edu.

Take care and stay safe!
Use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, NextDoor.

Create one all-purpose post and “pin” at top.

**Grab attention** and draw people in with your first sentence.

Use **eye catching photos and videos** in your posts with samples of the meals and people.

Make your **posts simple, direct, and clearly point** to where they can find more information.

**Use Bullet Points** with colored emojis as the “bullets.”

- This practice helps grab attention.
- It makes it easier to read – so more likely people will read the entire post.
- Stars or apples work well here.
Sample Facebook Post with Emojis

Eos Foundation is with Andrea Silbert
Published by Nicole Porter (?) - March 20 at 2:12 PM

Hats off to Barnstable Public Schools Food Director Dave Badot for getting 5,600 meals ready for kids today!

⭐ On Fridays you will receive 6 meals - 3 Breakfast & 3 Lunches for the weekend.

⭐ If you miss the bus delivery you can still pick up meals at 1 of the 4 pick-up locations in Barnstable today from 4pm-6pm:
Hyannis Youth and Community Center, Barnstable Intermediate School, Hyannis West Elementary and the Barnstable United Elementary School.

⭐ You do not have to be eligible for free or reduced price meals at school. These meals are available to anyone that may need them.

⭐ Meals are for ALL children 0-18, not just school age.

⭐ You Do NOT have to be a student in the district to receive a meal.

See a list of bus locations in the comments.
How to Get Posts to Go Viral

- **Tag people or organizations** that you would like to share the post. You can do this in the post, the image, or the comments.
  - Organizations: meal location sites, local newspapers, radio stations and other media, PTAs, civic and other local groups, childcare centers, after-school programs, and youth agencies.
  - People: Mayor, local/state/federal legislators, selectboard chair

- **End the post by asking people** to pass along the information (avoid the word “share” if possible as it triggers the algorithms to show the post to fewer people).

- **Post more than once** over the course of a few days.
  - Not everyone will see your original post.
  - People require repetition to take action. They must see the message a few times.
On Facebook, share your post in as many local, community-based Facebook groups as you can. Aim for sharing in at least 10 groups.

- Town community group; groups of moms; groups for local activities; and even local business, job, and service/yard sale groups; as these groups tend to be very active and have many members. They are also the groups that will have the largest numbers of people in need.

Mayors, select board, superintendents, principals, school nutrition directors, teachers, and parents should be asked to post meal photos, videos, and information on all platforms multiple times each week.

Post the happy parent comments and thank you posts – we all need more good news!
Social Posts - Examples

This post received 688 shares in Facebook
Have the Superintendent and Others Share Posts

Barnstable Superintendent followed the same guidelines, posting eye-catching graphics with clear instructions multiple times over the course of a week.

It is important to post on multiple platforms - you will reach different people on each.
Don’t Forget to Post Notes of Thanks

Eos Foundation @EosFoundation · 22h
School meals from @dyadvantage are a great resource!

Shana says, "We are so grateful for that resource. I am out of work & expecting a new baby soon & I just wanted to shout out to the 2 volunteers @wixonschool. Thank you so much! Even though we aren't yet a school aged family."
Example: Take a Video of Your Meal Program to Advertise Across all Platforms

Video turned into advertisement

Use these “advertisements” on district/school websites, and across social media platforms.
Example: Take Photos of Your Meal Program to Advertise Across all Platforms

Use these “advertisements” on district/school websites, and across all social media platforms.
Reach out to local press outlets asking to post meal information as a Public Service Announcement

- Cable TV, radio, newspapers, and online media.
- Ideally, the meal calendar and menu options could be posted on local press every day.
- Reaching out to multi-lingual outlets is critical.
- Eos can create a press release for you. See example.
Sample Release for You to Tailor

Eos Happy to Help

Press Release Example

Uxbridge Offers Healthy Meal Service to Children During School Closures  
Nutritious Breakfast and Lunch available free for all children ages 0-21

April X, 2020 — To support families during school closures, Uxbridge Public Schools are providing children aged 0-21 with free, nutritious breakfast and lunch meals every day of the week as part of the USDA’s emergency COVID-19 response.

“We want people to know that these healthy meals are available to every child, from babies to young adults. You don’t have to be an Uxbridge student or even live in town to receive them. In fact, parents/caregivers can pick up meals on children’s behalf to help ensure safe social distancing,” said Superintendent Frank Tiano. “We know that home food supplies are running low and it’s important to try to keep people out of the supermarkets. This is a federally funded program, and the food is nutritious, so please come take your meals!”

Uxbridge Public Schools offer meals at the Taft Early Learning Center, 16 Granite St, Uxbridge, MA 01569. Meals are available for pick-up on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with a breakfast and lunch offered for multiple days. “On Monday and Wednesday, we offer two breakfasts and lunches to cover Tuesday, and Thursday. On Friday, we offer three breakfasts and lunches to carry children through the weekend,” said Stephanie Barstow, the district’s School Nutrition Director.

- Meals are available **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11am-1pm**.
- Children receive a **free breakfast and lunch for every day of the week** (bagged breakfast and bagged lunch). Children (or parents/guardians on behalf of children) can take multiple days’ worth of meals at once.
- On Fridays, families can pick up 6 meals to cover both a breakfast and a lunch on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- Children do not need to be present for parents/guardians to pick up the meals.
- Meals are available to all children ages 0-21, babies and preschooler-aged children can also receive meals.
- Children do not have to be from Uxbridge or attend a district school, this is a community-wide meals program.
- Safe social distancing is encouraged via the pick-up process: Meals are distributed outside cafeteria doors on the sidewalk where families enter the drive-up/pick-up line, pull up to the curb, and call out the number of children they are collecting meals for. Food service staff place meals in the trunk of vehicles to maintain distance.
- Anyone who cannot make it out of their house to pick up a meal is encouraged to call Stephanie at 508-278-8640 or email sbarstow@uxbridge.k12.ma.us.
**Goal:** Eos grants are focused on helping school districts and youth agencies in MA to ramp up to feed more kids.

**Requirements**
- Only MA districts or youth organizations may apply.
- Applicants must be using one of the USDA’s COVID-19 emergency meals programs to reimburse food costs.
- Monies are primarily intended for equipment and supplies.
- Applicants must provide home delivery for children who need it.

**Technical Assistance:** Eos staff and consultants can also help you:
- Problem-solve any questions you have for DESE.
- Think about ways to maximize the number of children participating.
- Help you figure out social media.
- Draft a press release and manage press follow-up/placement.
- Create meal flyers/advertisements.

Application available on [EosFoundation.org](http://EosFoundation.org) home page

Community-Wide Children’s Meal Grant Program
Learnings from Peers: Successes and Challenges

Panelists

• Laura Benavidez  
  Executive Director, Food and Nutrition Services  
  Boston Public Schools

• Tom Burke  
  Resident District Manager, Chartwells  
  Brockton Public Schools

• Susan Murray  
  Director of Food and Nutrition  
  Nauset Public Schools & President-Elect SNA of MA

Moderated by Andrea Silbert, President, Eos Foundation
Thank You

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