The Impact of COVID-19 on School Nutrition Programs: A Review of the Evidence

State-of-the-Science Monthly Webinar
April 2021
**Healthy Eating Research (HER)**  
A national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Duke University

**COVID-19 School Nutrition Implications Working Group**  
589 researchers, advocacy organization representatives and practitioners, including 200+ students

### Selected Collaborators
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- American Heart Association – Voices for Healthy Kids
- American Public Health Services Association
- American Society for Nutrition
- Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators
- Center for Ecoliteracy
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Federal Nutrition Research Coalition
- Feeding America
- Food Research & Action Center
- Healthy Schools Campaign
- Hunger Free America
- Lunch Assist
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Farm to School Network
- National WIC Association
- School Nutrition Association (SNA)
- Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry Campaign
- Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
- Trust for America’s Health
- Urban School Food Alliance
- Other NOPREN Working Groups & PAPREN (CDC-sponsored Physical Activity Policy Research and Evaluation Network)

### Sub-Groups
#### Shared Data Collection Methods
- Survey
- Qualitative
- Implementation processes

#### Special Impact Topics
- Accelerated weight gain
- Innovations in meal service
- Pandemic/summer EBT
- Meals during instructional breaks
- Financial/operational health
- Early childhood
- Summer meal programs
- School/early childhood reopening
- State responses assessment

#### Case Studies
- Large urban district responses

### Products (as of April 2021)
- Website
- Supported fellowship and co-chairs
- Student internship matchmaking tool
- Student summer seminar series and virtual poster session
- Resource manager, listserv, weekly resource digest
- 2 data collection repositories
- 36 peer-reviewed research articles - accepted, under review or development
- 2 HER research briefs (+ 2 under development)
- 4 fact sheets
- 7 Op-Eds
- 4 News article features
- 23 presentations and webinars


https://nopren.ucsf.edu/covid-19-response
March 10, 2021
11:00 am to 12:30 Pm EST

About the Webinar: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/international-actions-on-school-meals-in-times-of-crisis-tickets-140971121419
Webinar Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vFQ12bR6lQ
Interested in Planning Future Events: Please email sheilafly9@gmail.com
**HER NOPREN Student Supports**

- **HER NOPREN Weekly Digest**
  - Email [Kirsten.Arm@duke.edu](mailto:Kirsten.Arm@duke.edu) to join the list serv
  - Share resources to post and any feedback with Lindsey.Miller102@duke.edu

- **Student Internship Resources**
  - [Listing of Items Digest Follows (Including Internship Listing)](#)

- **2021 Summer Student Series, Summer Internships & Student Showcases**
  - In the works through HER NOPREN
1) Strengthening the Impact of USDA’s Summer Meals Program During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic
   - Jessica Soldavini, PhD, MPH, RD, LDN & Becky Franckle, ScD, MPH

2) “It Opened Everyone’s Eyes:” Perspectives of Child Nutrition Professionals on Implementing School Nutrition Programs during COVID-19
   - Hannah Lane, PhD

3) Universal Free School Meals: An International Review
   - Juliana Cohen, PhD & Gabby Mcloughlin, PhD

4) Share Our Strength’s Work on Feeding Kids During the Pandemic
   - Margaret Read
Title of the HER Research Brief: Improving Access to Free School Meals: Addressing Intersections Between Universal Free School Meal Approaches and Educational Funding

Purpose: Given the unprecedented number of schools not collecting school meal applications this year, combined with Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) kicking off, where CEP expansion and universal school meals will likely be considered, this research brief aims to:
1) Provide an overview of current options for universal free meal provisions;
2) Summarize the intersections between universal free school meal approaches and educational funding; and
3) Identify recommendations for policy and practice to address the intersections between school meal food service and educational funding in order to improve access to universal free school meals.

Team: Amelie Hecht; Caroline Dunn; Lindsey Turner; Sheila Fleischhacker; Erica Kenney; Sara Bleich

Presentation: May 11th NOPREN School Wellness Working Group Brief Overview
Strengthening the Impact of USDA’s Summer Meals Program During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Presenters: Jessica Soldavini & Rebecca Franckle

**Summer Meals Program (SMP)**

**Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**
- A federally-funded, state-administrated program
- Reimburses program operators who serve free meals and snacks to children & adolescents in income-eligible areas during the summer
- Commonly located at schools, community centers, parks, faith-based organizations, summer camps, etc.
- Children 18 years or younger can receive 1-2 reimbursable meals each day

**Seamless Summer Option (SSO)**
- Available for schools that participate in the USDA National School Lunch (NSLP) and Breakfast (SBP) Programs,
- Allows streamlined continuation of the same meal service rules and claims procedures used during the regular school year, including nutrition standards

“Congregate feeding” requirement: Children must consume SMP meals and snacks on-site
Summer is Time of Unique Need & Risk

During the summer:
- Food insecurity increases
- Weight gain accelerates
  - Certain racial/ethnic populations
  - Children with overweight or obesity
- Obesogenic behaviors are less regulated vs. structured days

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (2019):

- **National School Lunch Program (NSLP):** 22 million children received free or reduced-priced meals
- **Summer Meals Program (SMP):** fewer than 2.7 million children participated

*Only 13.8 children participated in SMP for every 100 children receiving free and reduced-price lunch during the school year*


https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/child-nutrition-programs/summer-food-service-program/#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20the%20Summer%20Food,program's%20peak%20month%20of%20July
SMP Participation Barriers

- Variety of known barriers to participation
  - Transportation
  - Access in rural areas
  - Location of meal sites
Summer Meals Program (SMP) is Understudied

• Child diet quality appears to be lower during the summer
• Few studies on the direct effects of the SMP
• Recent review article:
  • 8 peer-reviewed articles,
  • 10 other research documents related to SFSP

Brazendale et al, J Sch Health 2018; Wang et al, J Sch Health 2015; Turner & Calvert, JAND 2019
Food Insecurity in the United States, April 2020

The children in my household were not eating enough because we just couldn't afford enough food.

The food that we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have enough money to get more.

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Fig1_new_LO.png
https://isen.northwestern.edu/state-levels-of-food-insecurity-during-covid-19
Research Brief Aims

(1) Explain the meal pattern requirements and select operational differences between SMP and the federal meal programs typically utilized during a traditional school year (i.e., NSLP/SBP/CACFP);

(2) Summarize evidence on the effectiveness of the SMP, with a focus on food insecurity and nutrition quality;

(3) Discuss key challenges, program adaptations, needs and opportunities resulting from COVID-19; and

(4) Identify critical knowledge gaps and opportunities with the greatest likelihood to shape future SMP policy and practice
SFSP Nutrition Standards

• Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
  • Updated NSLP/SSO and CACFP meal pattern guidelines to reflect 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

• Meal pattern requirements for SFSP not as strong
  • Not aligned with 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* or the latest edition 2020-2025

• SFSP meal patterns could be updated to mirror select elements of NSLP and/or CACFP

### Summer Meals Program (SMP): Summary of the Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alleviation of food insecurity</strong></td>
<td>A few studies suggest availability and accessibility of SMP sites is associated with food security status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improvements in nutrient intakes and diet-related outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Limited research. A couple short-term pilot studies reported promising results related to increases in nutrition knowledge, choices and behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improvements in child weight or other health outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Limited research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improvements in academic, behavioral or cognitive outcomes</strong></td>
<td>No known studies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COVID-19 Adaptations

- In March 2020, most NSLP/SBP meal sites across the country rapidly transitioned to SMP meal sites, which allowed for meal service flexibilities and higher reimbursements to help with the increased costs of serving meals during the COVID-pandemic.

- Current waivers include:
  - Allowing parents and guardians to pick up meals to bring home to their kids
  - Allowing sites to provide multiple-days’ worth of meals at once
  - Allowing meals be served in non-congregate settings
  - Allowing meal pattern waivers when the supply chain is not accessible
  - Allowing states to serve free meals to children through SMP in all areas

- Waivers currently extended through September 30, 2021

SMP Meal Service Innovations

• Grab-and-Go Meals
• Meal Delivery
• Serving Multiple Meals at Once
• Serving Bulk Foods

Kinsey et al, Am J Public Health 2020

https://schoolmealsthatrock.org/2021/04/03/school-food-on-the-frontlines-its-been-a-covid-year-for-doug-heather-and-burlingtons-team/
https://twitter.com/SchoolMealsRock/status/1375064047599648769/photo/1
Research Needs and Opportunities During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

• Examine SFSP nutritional quality
• Assess SFSP participants’ diet quality & weight outcomes
• Examine the need and impact of providing more than 2 meals and/or snacks per day
• Evaluate COVID-19 flexibilities with greatest potential to increase SFSP participation

Policy & Practice Needs and Opportunities During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

• Developing and disseminating best practices, case studies, technical assistance and support materials aimed at improving the nutritional quality and reach of SFSP, as well as increasing SFSP participation in high-risk, underserved areas;
• Conducting demonstration projects and pilots of innovative collaborative approaches across key sectors and settings to bolster SFSP participation and nutritional quality; and
• Convene an expert National Academics of Science, Engineering and Medicine panel to review and update the nutrition standards and meal requirements for SFSP
Questions?

jessica6@live.unc.edu
Franckle@bc.edu
“It opened everyone’s eyes”

Broad perspectives of child nutrition professionals on implementing school nutrition programs during COVID-19

Hannah Lane, PhD, MPH
Duke University School of Medicine
NOPREN State of the Science Webinar, April 6, 2021
Qualitative and Implementation Data Subgroup

• Goal: streamline and ensure policy relevance of qualitative investigation of school meal program implementation during COVID-19

• Developed a repository of open-ended questions for food service directors or other stakeholders
  ▪ Collaborated with organizational partners (School Nutrition Association, Lunch Assist) to create concept definitions and sample questions
  ▪ Mapped concepts of interest to existing frameworks and FNS nutrition standards

• Repository use
  ▪ Data collection instrument in ~5 state-specific studies, 2 national studies/projects, 1 social media project during 2020 – several papers published or under review
  ▪ Adapted based on state policies, state and local stakeholder interest, organizational priorities, time period of data collection
Please use and share the [Google doc](#) (and document usage)!
Study 1: North Carolina

- Collaborative project between 4 universities and an applied food systems research firm
  - Endorsement by N.C Department of Public Instruction and the Carolina Hunger Initiative
- Objective: Understand reach and implementation of school nutrition programs across North Carolina during COVID-19
- Methods: Semi-structured interviews with child nutrition directors (n=23) guided by repository; GIS mapping of meal sites
- Funders:
  - NIH National Heart, Blood, Lung Institute K12 Career Development Award (PI: Lane)
  - UNC North Carolina Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute COVID-19 Pilot Grant (PI: Ammerman)
Preliminary Themes

• Inner Program: Staff are “unsung heroes”
• Local Context: “It opened everyone’s eyes”
• State Context: Leadership was a “steadying force”
• National Context: Program should be “straight across the board universal”

“We have asked for years and years for this program to be funded, to feed all kids. **If it’s ever going to happen, it needs to happen now**”
Study 2: Maryland

• Collaboration between Maryland State Department of Education and University of Maryland School of Medicine

• Objective: Assess RE-AIM (reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation, maintenance) of school meal service during COVID-19

• Methods: Mixed methods analysis of: claims data; survey (n=102) and semi-structured interviews (n=19) with directors and state leaders guided by repository; GIS mapping of meal sites; coding of public facing communication

• Funder:
  • MSDE Office of School and Community Nutrition
Preliminary Themes

• Reach/Adoption: Waivers were essential, but complicated
• Implementation Concerns: Financial losses and staff safety
• Implementation Triumphs: Staff flexibility and use/growth of partnerships
• Maintenance: Consider universal free meals

“We spend a lot of money to make sure these meal eligibilities are correct. We've gotten so far away from what we're really supposed to be doing, feeding children, making sure that the meal is a great and healthy meal...let's feed everybody and not worry about who needs it and who doesn't because they all really need it in the end.”
Dissemination

Maryland

EVALUATION OF COVID-19 SCHOOL MEALS RESPONSE: SPRING 2020

Schools disabled during COVID-19 have faced the most for food insecurity among children across the United States, including in Maryland. To support access to meals for children during school closures, the emergency summer school program (SSP) was implemented in lieu of traditional school meals programs. The Maryland School Wellness (Maryland) and the Student Nutrition Program (SNP), federal and state governments also issued several temporary waivers (see Exhibit 1) to enable flexibility to existing policies to support the provision of these emergency meals.

The University of Maryland School of Agriculture (UMS) has worked with the Maryland Department of Education (MDE) on various state programs (e.g., Summer Nutrition Program, Food for Education, Agri-Markets, and Food Service) to evaluate meal provision during COVID-19-related school closures. In the spring of 2020 (April 15-June 26), the evaluation used the Maryland School Wellness (Maryland) and Summer Nutrition Program (SNP), federal and state governments also issued several temporary waivers (see Exhibit 1) to enable flexibility to existing policies to support the provision of these emergency meals.

1. Evaluate the reach (number of free or reduced-price meals served) and meal quality served (number of times meal provision and known meals served before and after school closures). The rate of federal and state distribution strategies associated with meal service flexibility.

2. Describe adoption (of communication and formulas) and implementation costs of school meal service.

3. Unserialize public and distribution of meal-implementation processes for meal distribution, including communication and support systems.

4. Unserialize strategies for maintaining meal service (e.g., reducing staff during school closures).

Throughout this report, we describe evaluation results and key next steps for refinement, policy, and implementation.

FEDERAL & MARYLAND STATE COVID-19 BELIEF NUTRITION WAIVERS ISSUED BY MONTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARCH 2020</th>
<th>April 2020</th>
<th>May 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available meal service flexibility (Federal and Maryland)</td>
<td>Available meal service flexibility (Federal)</td>
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<td>Provisions for meal service flexibility (Federal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (Nationwide)</td>
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Twenty-five waivers and subsequent waiver extensions were released by the USDA and the State of Maryland during the first 15 weeks of the pandemic (between March 16th and June 27th, as shown in the table).

http://www.marylandschoolwellness.org/tools/Data-Reports/

Carolina Hunger Initiative

Voices from the Front Line of School Nutrition in NC

UPDATE: USDA EXTENDS FREE MEALS FOR KIDS THROUGH END OF SCHOOL YEAR

Learn how to find meals for kids near you, or check your school or district's website, social media, and direct communications for the latest information on how and when the meals will be served.

Thank you, USDA, for making this decision that benefits all children and school nutrition staff in NC. And thank you to the school nutrition team at the NC Department of Public Instruction and all the many NC organizations that were early and firm advocates for this extension.

“We don’t ask a child in the United States what your mama and daddy makes to get on the school bus. Or to get a textbook. Or to hand them a declarer. Why in the world do we draw the line in the cafeterias?”

—School Nutrition Administrator in North Carolina

https://www.carolinahungereference.org/Voices/

http://www.marylandschoolwellness.org/tools/Data-Reports/
Ongoing and future research

• Theoretically driven analyses and publications within studies
• Cross-study secondary analyses focused on repository concepts
  • Funding from Share Our Strength to identify and describe innovations and best practices across N.C and Maryland (2021)
  • R21 application under review includes six studies across the U.S. that used the repository
• Establishing novel research method to acquire qualitative data when data are need quickly and research questions have broad applicability
North Carolina Study Partners

- Hannah Lane, Duke SOM
- Jessica Soldavini, UNC Chapel Hill
- Alice Ammerman, UNC Chapel Hill
- Jared McGuirt, UNC Greensboro
- Beth Katz, Food Insight Group
- Stephanie Jilcott Pitts, East Carolina University

North Carolina Study Team

- Duke: Kiran Grover, Isabelle Sico, Abby Rader
- UNC Chapel Hill: Sam Rasnic, Luisa-Furstenberg-Beckman, Madison Troyer, Stephanie Martin, Heather Emmett
- Food Insight Group: Aaron Cohen
- Endorsement from DPI and Carolina Hunger Initiative

Maryland Study Partners

- Erin Hager, University of MD SOM
- Leslie Sessom-Parks, MSDE
- Chela Cooper, MSDE
- Linda Worrel, MSDE
- Yan Wang, George Washington University
- Hannah Lane, Duke SOM
- Jared McGuirt, UNC Greensboro
- Zafar Zafari, University of MD Baltimore

Maryland Study Team

- University of Maryland SOM: Perri Carroll, Janny Dinh, Leah Gutermuth

Thank you!
Email: hannah.lane@duke.edu
Twitter: @hglane
Universal Free School Meals- An International Review

Juliana Cohen, ScM, ScD
Associate Professor, Department of Health Sciences, Merrimack College
Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Nutrition, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Gabriella McLoughlin, PhD
Postdoctoral Research Associate, Implementation Science Center for Cancer Control (WU-ISC3)
Prevention Research Center
Washington University in St. Louis
Background

- Policies that support universal free school meals are gaining attention as a strategy to:
  - Reduce stigma and diet-related disparities
  - Promote children’s nutrition more broadly
  - Potentially lower administrative costs for schools

- Currently universal school meals are only available in a small number of countries
  - Finland
  - Sweden
  - Estonia
  - South Korea
  - England & Scotland (only for children in their first three years of primary school [children ages 4–7y])
  - Japan (universal but not free)
  - US (high-poverty schools)
Methods

- Conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) guidelines

- Four online databases were used: PubMed, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Thomson Reuters’ Web of Science, and Academic Search Ultimate (and references + a review of all articles citing the resultant literature)

- Eligible studies were quantitative research articles evaluating universal free school meals AND:
  - School meal participation rates
  - Academic performance
  - Attendance
  - Body Mass Index (BMI)
  - Diet quality
  - Food insecurity
  - School finances

- Inclusion criteria were English, peer-reviewed publications or official government reports within countries with developed economies (i.e., members of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD]), and conducted in elementary – high schools during the academic year

- Assessment of study quality and biases were based on adapted Newcastle–Ottawa Scales (NOS)
Results

Location of Studies

- USA, 25, 53%
- Norway, 5, 11%
- Denmark, 3, 7%
- Netherlands, 1, 2%
- Greece, 2, 4%
- England, 2, 4%
- Scotland, 2, 4%
- Wales, 3, 7%
- New Zealand, 2, 4%
- England, 2, 4%
- Wales, 3, 7%
- Scotland, 2, 4%
- Netherlands, 1, 2%
- Greece, 2, 4%
- Norway, 5, 11%
- Denmark, 3, 7%
- USA, 25, 53%
Influence on Participation and Attendance

### Participation
- **Positive:**
  - Very high: 9
  - High: 2
  - Low: 4
- **Neutral:**
  - Very high: 1
- **Negative:**
  - Very high: 5
  - High: 5

### Attendance
- **Positive:**
  - Very high: 5
  - High: 0
- **Neutral:**
  - Very high: 1
- **Negative:**
  - Very high: 1
  - High: 0
Influence on Diet and BMI

**Diet**

- Positive: 8 studies
- Neutral: 2 studies
- Negative: 2 studies

**BMI/Weight Outcomes**

- Positive: 2 studies
- Neutral: 2 studies
- Negative: 1 study

Legend:
- Very high
- High
- Low
Influence on Academic Performance

Number of Studies

Effect on Performance

Academic Performance

Very high
High
Low

Positive Neutral Negative

5 0 1
3 1 0

 NOPREN
Nutrition & Obesity
Policy Research & Evaluation Network
Discussion

- Universal free school meals appears to have multiple benefits for students, particularly those who are food-insecure and/or near eligible for free meals.

- The majority of studies in the current review found that universal free school meals were associated with increases in participation and improved diet quality and food security, and conversely, were associated with either no change or improved BMI.

- Future research should further examine the financial impact of universal free school meals for both schools and families.

- Overall, in the presence of strong nutrition guidelines, universal free school meals have multiple potential benefits for students and schools, and should be considered by countries not currently with this policy.
Thank you

Co-Authors

- **Marlene Schwartz**  
  Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, University of Connecticut

- **Lindsey Turner**  
  College of Education, Boise State University

- **Amelie Hecht**  
  Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Our COVID Response to Food Insecurity

Margaret Read
Senior Manager of Policy and Research

• April 12, 2021
No Kid Hungry is a Campaign By Share Our Strength

We’re an organization dedicated to ending hunger and poverty. Through proven, effective campaigns, we connect people who care to ideas that work.
## OUR MISSION

**TO END HUNGER AND POVERTY IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD**

### ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>WHAT WE DO</th>
<th>OUR PROMISE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHARE OUR STRENGTH</strong></td>
<td>Everyone who wants to play a part in ending hunger and poverty</td>
<td>Everyone has a strength to share to help ensure every individual can live a healthy and productive life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NO KID HUNGRY</strong></td>
<td>People who believe every kid should have the opportunity to fulfill their potential</td>
<td>You can ensure no kid will grow up hungry in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COOKING MATTERS</strong></td>
<td>Those who fund or offer food skills education</td>
<td>Proven solutions that educate and inspire families to shop for, prepare and eat healthy food every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Wealth Partners</td>
<td>Nonprofits and foundations focused on poverty-related and social justice issues</td>
<td>A partner in reimagining what's possible in order to solve social problems — once and for all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Share Our Strength connects people who care to ideas that work | No Kid Hungry ensures every child has healthy food every day | Cooking Matters empowers caregivers with essential food skills to improve the health of their babies and kids | Community Wealth Partners helps change agents tackle social justice and poverty-related issues |
FY20 Campaign Map

Priority Campaign:
Long-term investment for strategic growth in 3 states that have significant breakfast gaps.

Critical Breakfast Expansion Campaign:
Significant momentum and immediate opportunity to drive breakfast growth.

No Kid Hungry Campaign:
Campaign partnership focused on breakfast, afterschool, and/or summer programs.

Consulting Campaign:
Partnership with states Executive Leaders (Governor, First Lady, Superintendent) to provide strategic best practices and technical assistance.

No Kid Hungry Grantees:
Lower-level grants to partners focused on breakfast, afterschool and/or summer programs.

Updated as of 12/8/18
No Kid Hungry Guideposts

Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry campaigns set the following long-term “guideposts” in key child nutrition programs:

- **Breakfast**
  70% of children who eat free or reduced-priced (F/R) lunch also receive school breakfast.

- **Afterschool**
  The total number of afterschool meals (CACFP suppers, CACFP snacks, and NSLP snacks) is ≥ 20% of F/R lunch meals.

- **Summer**
  Daily summer meals and snacks served in all summer programs is ≥ 30% of target daily F/R meals served during school year.
Whatever It Takes Report

- Over $66 million to 1,800 schools, local nonprofits, and food banks across all 50 states, DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico
  - 40% suburban
  - 37% urban
  - 30% rural
Texting Hotline
Text FOOD to 877-877

Free Meals Finder
https://www.nokidhungry.org/find-free-meals
Resource Development

Summary of COVID-19 Child Nutrition Program Response Nationwide Waivers & Memos

This resource briefly describes all nationwide waivers and guidance memos released by the USDA in response to the coronavirus. Due to the number of extensions, this resource begins with waivers listed by expiration date, the waiver name links to description of the latest version. Next, the table lists waivers and memos in order of number and release date. The waiver or memo number in the table links to the USDA landing page for the waiver.

This was last updated on 4/8/2021.

See the USDA FNS website for all nationwide waivers and guidance temporarily. See the end of this document for a glossary of acronyms and terms.

State agencies are eligible to use all nationwide waivers without application, but they must still elect to be subject to the waiver by notifying their USDA Regional Office. These waivers do not apply to all operations automatically. State agencies must opt in and provide information to operators before operators can implement the waiver. Please contact your state agency for more information about those and other state-requested waivers.

Summer Meals Waivers in Effect Until September 30, 2021
- Non-concurrent Feeding in the NSLP & SSO (65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)
- Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children (65, 66, 70, 71, 72, 73)
- Meal Service Time Flexibilities in the NSLP and SSO (67, 68, 70, 71)
- Meal Pattern Flexibility in the NSLP & SSO (66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74)
- Area Eligibility Waiver Extensions (65, 66, 67, 72)
- Area Eligibility for Closed Limited Sites in the NSLP and NGLP SSO (65, 66, 72, 73)
- Waiver of the First Week Site Visit Requirement in the NSLP (65, 66, 68, 69)
- Offer Versus Serve Flexibility in the NSLP (65, 67, 72)
- Allow Sponsors that Successfully Participated in the NSLP in FY 2019 to Operate as Experienced Sponsors in FY 2021 (65, 66)

Monitoring Waivers in Effect Until September 30, 2021
- Waiver of Child Presence Requirements for CAFCP Sponsors (65, 66, 67)
- Waiver of Child Presence Requirements for NSLP and SSO State Agencies (65, 66, 67, 72)
- Waiver of Child Presence Requirements for SNSP Sponsors (65, 66, 67)
- Waiver of Child Presence Requirements for NSLP State Agencies (65, 66, 67, 72)
- Waiver of Child Presence Requirements for SNSP State Agencies (65, 66, 67, 72)

Summer Meals Waivers in Effect Until June 30, 2021
- Allow NSLP and SSO Operations Through School Year 2020-2021 (65, 66, 67)
- Allow Reimbursement for Meals Served Prior to Notification of Approval and Provide Flexibility for Pre-Approval Visits in the NSLP (65, 66, 67)
- Food Service Management Contract Duration in the NGLP and NSLP (65, 66, 67)
- Meal Pattern Flexibility in the NSLP & SSO (65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72)
- Extended through Sept. 30, 2021 for SSO only

Resource Development

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE MEAL PARTICIPATION

This resource features tried and true strategies to increase meal participation from FNS Directors across the nation, from hosting virtual meetings with families to playing tangies on your mobile meals route, like the ice cream trucks to signal meal pickup time.

Student Input & Meal Quality

"Get to know your customer — your students! Try collaborating with students and gathering input so there is mutual ownership of the school meal program. Together you can build breakfast and lunch menus and increase meal participation."

— Randy Fields, FNS Coordinator, Stephenson ISD, rural TX

Key Strategies

- Focus on cultural preferences that reflect community taste.
- Consider asking students which recipes they like, via social media or a conventional meal pick-up site.
- Build a reputation for high-quality, healthy meals.
- Incorporate local products and produce whenever possible and feature the local producers in your menu.

Using Culinary Skills

By啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶啶din

For more resources on serving meals during the coronavirus pandemic, visit our website: https://foodfacts.mifn.gov/factsheets/response/cooperation
Resource Development

- **American Rescue Plan (ARP)**
  - SNAP
  - WIC
  - P-EBT
  - CACFP
  - Child Care Supports
  - Expansion of the Child Care Tax Credit
  - ESSERF (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund)
  - Funding to States, Cities, Local and Tribal Governments and US Territories
  - FEMA Disaster Relief Fund
Current Research Projects

• COVID School Meals (Spring & Summer 2020)
• Maryland, North Carolina, & New York
  • Erin Hager
  • Hannah Lane
  • Jessica Soldavini
  • Alice Ammerman
  • Jared McGuirt
  • Julia McCarthy
Measurement, Planning, and Analysis Team

Landscape Analysis
- Establish a quantitative understanding of a community’s baseline program participation.
- Identify and recommend potential target areas/schools based on No Kid Hungry best practices.
- Set ambitious and achievable goals based on strategies and progress forecasts.

Hunger Data Analysis
- Analyze national and local participation rates and trends.
- Provide Share Our Strength’s “official” numbers for progress and impact reporting – used in funder proposals and reports, NKH Dinner guides, press releases, impact reports, talking points, etc.

Technology Projects
- Collect program participation data to build-out Share Our Strength’s cloud-based data lake.
- Create online dashboards and maps to connect No Kid Hungry staff with easy-to-understand data and information.
Lifecycle of Measurement, Planning & Analysis

1. Determine current landscape
2. Develop a plan & set goals
3. Monitor progress throughout the year
4. Evaluate end of year progress

Cycle: Determine -> Develop -> Monitor -> Evaluate
Excerpt from PA landscape analysis:

Opportunities to Increase Breakfast Participation

**Breakfast Gap by County**

The following table shows the 11 counties with the largest school breakfast participation gaps in the state. The final column, “Gap to 70% (# of kids)”, shows the number of F/R eligible kids that would be added to the School Breakfast Program if the county reaches the NKH guidepost of 70% participation. The map displays the same information for the entire state. The counties with the largest breakfast gaps appear the darkest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Name</th>
<th>Total # of Schools</th>
<th>Participation %</th>
<th>Gap to 70% (# kids)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHILADELPHIA</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>15,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONTGOMERY</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEHIGH</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>7,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLEGHENY</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>7,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANCASTER</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>6,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUCKS</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>6,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUZERNE</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>4,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BERKS</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>4,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHESTER</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>3,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YORK</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>3,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTHAMPTON</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3,596</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NKH Measurement

### Example from Texas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Area</th>
<th>FRP Lunch ADP</th>
<th>FRP Breakfast ADP</th>
<th>Breakfast ADP %</th>
<th>FRP Lunch ADP</th>
<th>FRP Breakfast ADP</th>
<th>Breakfast ADP %</th>
<th>Additional Children Served</th>
<th>Change from Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont</td>
<td>11,737</td>
<td>7,172</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>11,473</td>
<td>7,072</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>109,936</td>
<td>90,809</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>115,118</td>
<td>94,845</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>4,036</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garland</td>
<td>29,824</td>
<td>13,390</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29,302</td>
<td>14,246</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irving</td>
<td>22,659</td>
<td>13,490</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22,158</td>
<td>14,671</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Vega</td>
<td>2,226</td>
<td>1,296</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>2,283</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlin</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesquite</td>
<td>24,413</td>
<td>9,014</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>23,906</td>
<td>9,145</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasadena</td>
<td>35,252</td>
<td>16,823</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35,666</td>
<td>18,466</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>1,643</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Arthur</td>
<td>6,029</td>
<td>3,037</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6,356</td>
<td>3,224</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>20,148</td>
<td>12,834</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>22,796</td>
<td>14,868</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>2,034</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>5,161</td>
<td>2,871</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>4,889</td>
<td>2,740</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>(131)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waco</td>
<td>10,686</td>
<td>6,314</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>10,541</td>
<td>6,429</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>278,814</strong></td>
<td><strong>177,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>64%</strong></td>
<td><strong>285,194</strong></td>
<td><strong>187,493</strong></td>
<td><strong>66%</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,993</strong></td>
<td><strong>2%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaboration with IT Team

Example from Breakfast Landscape Dashboard
Current Data Projects

- School Meal Trends with CEP
  - Lindsey Turner

- Texting Referral Project with m-Relief
  - https://www.mrelief.com/
THANK YOU

- Margaret Read
- mread@strength.org
Thank You
Upcoming Work Group Meetings

**Drinking Water:** April 28th @ 12:30pm EST  
Water Safety in California Public Schools Following Implementation of School Drinking Water Policies, Isioma Umunna, MSc  
Contact Mary Katherine Poole (mkpoole@hsph.harvard.edu) for more details.

**Early Childhood:** April 19th @ 1pm EST  
EC and WIC Work Group Student Research Spotlight 2021  
Contact Alison Tovar (alison_tovar@uri.edu) for more details.

**Food Service Guidelines:** April 27th @ 2pm EST  
Contact Bethany Williams (bethany-williams@ouhsc.edu) for more details.

**Healthy Food Retail:** April 20th @ 12-1pm ET  
SNAP Retail Policy & Evaluation: USDA Update from COVID-19 and Beyond  
Panel Presenters: Jordan Jones, Research Agricultural Economist, USDA ERS, Andrea Gold, Director, Retailer Policy and Management Division, USDA FNS, Eric Williams, Social Science Research Analyst, USDA FNS  
Contact Kirsten Arm (kirsten.arm@duke.edu) for more details.

**Rural Food Access:** April 15th @ 12pm EST  
Creciendo en Salud: Systems Change to Support Healthy Eating among Latino Youth and their Families in Benton County, Oregon, Dr. Megan Patton-López  
Contact Kyle Busse (kybusse@live.unc.edu) for more details.

**School Wellness:** April 13th @ 2pm EST  
Understanding Teacher Wellbeing and Social Support for Physical Activity in a Diverse School District during the COVID-19 Crisis, Dr. Anne Escaron  
Contact Amsie Hecht (ahecht2009@gmail.com) or Ann Kuhn (APullingKuhn@som.umaryland.edu) for more details.

**WIC Research Learning Collaborative:** April 15th @ 2:00pm EST  
Brainstorm Session for Research Ideas on WIC Policy Changes  
Contact wicretailresearch_lc@duke.edu for more details.
Want to learn more about NOPREN or join the network? Visit https://nopren.ucsf.edu or contact NOPREN@ucsf.edu