



SCHOOL MEAL DISTRIBUTION IN PRACTICE

Where school districts have closed in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19), schools across the country are developing innovative strategies to ensure Native youth and other students have readily accessible meals. Best practices and opportunities shared by these districts may be helpful for other schools looking to provide consistency in school breakfast and lunches. This resource showcases some of these considerations for reference. The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative has released and will continue to update its information on new regulatory flexibilities as they become available. For more information, we encourage you to check out www.indigenousfoodandag.com/COVID-19.

Utilize Existing Food Access Points

- Identify easily accessible locations for Native youth to access meals. Some school districts are:
 - Utilizing home drop-offs or home delivery options for students with limited transportation options
 - Staging centralized locations for meal pick-up
- Distributing multiple meals or day's worth of meals at pick-up times
- Based on location and available transportation, consider non-perishable foods or including heating/storing instructions for meals that require reheating
- Publicize updated maps or lists that include available pick-up site locations and times

Collaboration with Community Partners

- Outreach to faith-based organizations or anti-hunger community groups to support food distribution efforts
- Reimbursable school meals are restricted to students; community partners may offer additional food resources or monetary support to Native youth and families
- Local volunteers may help distribute food and minimize staffing challenges

Promote Safety of Staff and Volunteers:

- Schools that are closed for sanitation may consider availability of restrooms for staff and volunteers
- Scheduling distinct meal pick-up times based on grade level or ages to promote social distancing
- [Follow CDC guidance](#)

Potential Challenges for Consideration

- Students must be present to receive meals, parents and guardians may not pick up meals on their behalf
- Determining food demand
- Reimbursable meals during school closures can only offer a maximum of two meals per day, equivalent to breakfast and lunch during what would be the school week. Meal and reporting requirements must adhere to either the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program or the Summer Food Service Program, depending on which program is applied.
- Schools must request non-congregate waivers from state agencies.