



**Arlington Public Schools
Food Service Program
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Arlington Public School Families:

While the start of the school year looks a little different for everyone, I wanted to share with you some good news that schools nationwide received last week. The USDA extended a waiver that allows schools to serve **free breakfast and lunch to ALL students, as late as December 31, 2020 or as long as funding is available**. We are thrilled with this news as it means that we will be able to provide all Arlington Public School students with nutritious and nourishing food for free that will support them, both in school and at home.

What this means for your family and for Arlington Public Schools:

All children, ages 0-18, can receive a healthy breakfast and lunch every school day, at no cost, in a safe and welcoming environment. This applies to students who are attending classes in school or virtual classes at home, or a hybrid combination of these models.

Each child is allowed to receive up to 7 breakfast and 7 lunch meals for each week. Currently, we will be offering delivery of these meals the days students are not physically in school. Delivery will be on Wednesdays between 9:30 and 11:00. You can sign up for meal delivery by visiting <https://forms.gle/QiUGLRJSh5E2JHeR6>

This USDA waiver allows Arlington Public Schools to provide the most nourishing and appetizing meals possible for your children. When your children eat school meals, it helps the school system by providing federal funds to the district. The more meals we serve, the more funding we receive, allowing us to focus on meal quality, variety and innovative practices (new recipes, frozen take home meals, etc.). If your children have never before participated in school meals, consider trying the program this year!

Free meals can help families save time and money. By allowing us to prepare meals for your children you don't have to plan and shop for your children's breakfast and lunch each school day. All families are encouraged to participate in this program, regardless of income.

Currently, the USDA has allowed this waiver until December 31, 2020 or until it is no longer fiscally or legally possible. Therefore, families should still submit a household application to determine eligibility for free and reduced price school meals. This will also allow students to qualify for any additional benefits and ensure a seamless transition when schools move back to a paid program (if the waiver is not extended for January to June 2021). The application is available to download at <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/foodservices/>

In addition, we also encourage families to apply for SNAP benefits. SNAP provides monthly cash benefits (on an EBT card) to purchase groceries for eligible families. To apply for SNAP, visit <http://gettingsnap.org/> or call the Project Bread FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333. If you are unsure whether your family is eligible, the FoodSource Hotline can assist you with eligibility questions. Families approved for SNAP are directly eligible to receive free meals at school and do not need to fill out an application for free and reduced price meals.

We are still finalizing our plans for how, when and where meals for in-school and remote learners will be provided and we will be sharing those plans with families as soon as possible. We will be keeping our menu very simple in the beginning as we all learn new systems and procedures together! We will be offering both in school and home options. For updates, please visit us at <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/foodservices/>

Please reach out with any questions you might have. Your children are the reason we do our jobs and we are here to make sure that they are fueled with good food!

Best,

Denise H. Boucher

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