

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2010-08

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

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Sponsors sought for Summer Food Service Program

MADISON — Though Wisconsin is still in the middle of the school year, the Department of Public Instruction is planning ahead for summer as it seeks sponsors for the Summer Food Service Program, which provides free meals to economically disadvantaged children during school summer vacations.

State Superintendent Tony Evers noted that Wisconsin has seen an increasing need for nutrition programs during the school year and in summer. “More than one-third of our students during the school year qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The increasing number of economically disadvantaged children means there is an increasing need to offer meals as part of summer programming as well,” Evers said. “I encourage the agencies, schools, and other organizations that provide educational and recreational activities for our youth during the summer to recognize these needs and offer meals through the Summer Food Service Program as part of their services to youth.”

Wisconsin had a net gain of 18 sponsors for the Summer Food Service Program in 2009, the largest increase in program sponsors in the past five years. The 124 sponsors for the 2009 program served more than 1.9 million meals at 562 sites. Nationwide in 2009, youth ate 133 million meals at approximately 34,000 Summer Food Service Program sites.

The DPI has administered the Summer Food Service Program since its inception in 1975. Sponsors contract with the DPI to provide free meals to low-income children during the summer months. For the 2010 program year, sponsors may be:

- public or private nonprofit schools;
- public or private nonprofit residential camps;
- local, municipal, county, tribal, or state governments;
- public or private nonprofit colleges or universities;
- Upward Bound programs;
- libraries; or
- private nonprofit organizations (under special conditions).

(more)

All sponsors for the 2010 program year must complete a Summer Food Service Program application on-line. New sponsors are required to attend training on March 26 in Madison. Continuing sponsors for the 2010 summer program are invited to attend one of several training sessions to be held around the state to learn about program changes. Training for continuing sponsors will be held on March 2 in Rhinelander, March 3 and 4 in Madison, March 10 in Oak Creek, and March 19 in Rice Lake. Registration for training is on line and due by Feb. 19. To register, visit <http://dpi.wi.gov/fns/training.html>.

Meals for the Summer Food Service Program must be served in accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits institutions from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any U.S. Department of Agriculture-related activity should write to the USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Additional information about the Summer Food Service Program is available from Amy Kolano, (608) 266-7124, the DPI at <http://dpi.wi.gov/fns/sfsp1.html>, or the USDA at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/>.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010_08.pdf.