

News Release

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Over 31 million meals served to Wisconsin students during pandemic

Schools, communities working together to ensure children receive, have access to food

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction today announced over 31 million nutritious meals have been served to Wisconsin students at sites throughout the state since March 2020 according to claims filed to the agency.

Through the National School Lunch Program’s [Seamless Summer Option](#), the [School Breakfast Program](#), and the [Summer Food Service Program](#) – federally-funded programs administered by the DPI – 31,350,998 meals were provided by school food authorities and sponsors from mid-March to Aug. 20, 2020. The programs allow for healthy meals to be served free of charge to children 18-years old and younger living in low-income areas.

“Making sure students across our state have access to healthy food is a remarkable team effort, especially during these uncertain times,” State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor said. “School officials and food service staff have remained dedicated to keeping our students fed and have formed and grown relationships with their local communities. They are shining examples of the positive results that can come from working together for the well-being of our students.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, school food authorities and sponsors have utilized U.S. Department of Agriculture waivers to more efficiently provide meals to students who need them the most. These waivers have allowed school staff to serve and deliver meals in non-congregate settings, such as along school bus routes and drive-thru areas outside school buildings. Earlier this week, [the USDA announced](#) the extension of these waivers, meaning summer meal program operations across the nation could continue through as late as Dec. 31, 2020.

For more information on child nutrition programs in Wisconsin, [visit the DPI’s website](#).

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2020/million-meals-served-wisconsin-students>.