

Schools Can Help!

Learning does not end when school lets out. Neither does the need for good nutrition.

Nearly 18 million students depend on free or reduced-price school lunches and breakfasts for 9 months out of the year. For many of these children, summer vacation exposes them to an increased risk of hunger and developmental decline.

As an educator, you may know that children who miss breakfast or lunch are more likely to be sick, absent or tardy, disruptive in class, and inattentive. They also score lower on achievement tests.

Good nutrition is essential for learning in school. Summer food programs, with support from the USDA, give your school an opportunity to improve a child's physical and social development while providing nutritious meals.

Summer food programs help lower income students return to school ready to learn.



How can your school provide meals to students when the regular school year ends?

Summer Food

The Summer Food Service Program is ideal if you sponsor enrichment, recreational, or activity programs over the summer. It is a federally funded program administered by your State.

- The State agency reimburses sponsors for free meals served to children, including teenagers through age 18, at approved meal sites in low-income areas.
- Simplified rules allow sponsors to earn reimbursement for the meals they serve and use the money as they need for the food program.

Seamless Summer

Schools participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program are eligible to apply for the Seamless Summer Option.

- Seamless Summer has less paperwork, making it easier for schools to feed children during the traditional summer vacation periods and, for year-round schools, long school vacation periods.

- Once approved by the State agency, the school serves meals free of charge to children, including teenagers through age 18, under the school meal program rules.

- Meals are reimbursed at the free rates for school lunches, school breakfasts, and afterschool snacks, which are slightly lower than the Summer Food Service Program rates.

School Lunch and Breakfast

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are available for any school that is hosting an academic summer school.

- Academic summer schools that intend to serve meals only to enrolled students follow the same rules and claiming procedures for free, reduced-price, and paid meals that they follow during the regular school year.



Become a Sponsor

- School districts are well positioned to provide meals that complement learning and recreation opportunities for children at neighborhood schools, as well as at other community sites, including recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, and camps.
- A school may serve as a sponsor and prepare its own meals, or contract with a vendor to purchase meals.
- Sponsors are reimbursed for all meals served that meet USDA's nutrition standards.



Run a Site

- Summer food programs keep students engaged and school facilities open. Even if your school district cannot take on the responsibilities of a sponsor, your school can host a site.
- As a meal service site, the school supervises the children's meals, along with recreation and enrichment activities, under the administration of an approved Summer Food Service Program sponsor.

Be a Vendor

- A school may also serve as a vendor for another sponsor, and not administer or supervise a meal service site.
- Your school keeps food service workers employed and earns money for the school food service account by selling prepared meals through an agreement with an approved sponsor.

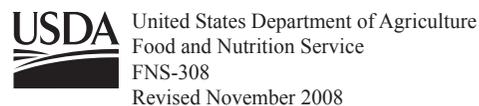
Everyone Wins with Summer Food!

- Low-income children have nutritious meals and organized activities.
- Low-income parents stretch food dollars and have healthy recreation for their children.
- Food service workers have summer employment.
- The school receives Federal money to run the food program.

What's the Next Step?
Contact your State agency!



Visit our website at:
www.summerfood.usda.gov



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



The Summer Food Service Program for Schools



U.S. Department of Agriculture