



Planting the Seed: Spring Resources to Nourish More Kids

Spring is here, and many are preparing to reach kids with nutritious meals during the summer and next school year. With hunger in New York [at its highest in five years](#), federal child nutrition programs are a vital tool to safeguard food security for families. This newsletter includes resources to leverage these programs, data on the impact of expanded free school meals in New York, upcoming deadlines, events, and more.

New Webinar: Offering Free School Meals For All: What's Next?

Thursday, June 5 at 9 AM

With more schools than ever offering free meals for all students, schools can strengthen the reach of existing programs, while also adding new ones. Join us to hear from Food Service Director Rachel Viens of Syracuse City School District about strategies to boost food security by maximizing school breakfast, summer nutrition, afterschool meals, and SNAP.

Can't make it? [Register](#) anyway to receive the recording and follow-up resources.

[Register Here](#)

Celebrate Provider Appreciation Day on Friday, May 9

Help us celebrate the child care providers who nourish New York's children through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP reimburses eligible childcare and afterschool program providers for serving healthy meals to children in their care. This [Provider Appreciation Day](#), we are featuring Little Feet Big Steps Daycare in a [blog post](#) that highlights how they use CACFP to connect children with the nutrition they need while attending daycare.

[Read the Blog Post](#)

Post on Social Media

Post on social media during Provider Appreciation Day to show your support and celebrate child care providers! Tag us on [Facebook](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#), and use the hashtag #ThankYouChildCare. Sample posts are below:

On Provider Appreciation Day, join us to say #ThankYouChildCare to the dedicated providers across New York who nourish kids with healthy food through #CACFP. Visit [ChildcareMealsNY.org](#) to learn more about CACFP.

Today and every day, we celebrate the many child care providers who nourish New York's children with healthy meals through #CACFP. Learn more about CACFP at [ChildcareMealsNY.org](#). #ThankYouChildCare

Learn more about CACFP

Visit [ChildcareMealsNY.org](#) or [AfterschoolMealsNY.org](#) to learn about serving meals through CACFP, how to apply, meal pattern requirements, and more.

Questions about getting started? Contact Kayla.Snyder@HungerSolutionsNY.org.

Summer Nutrition Programs Help Kids Access Food When School Is Out

The [Summer Food Service Program](#) (SFSP) and [Summer EBT](#) provide nutritious food to kids during summer break. Free summer meals can be served through the SFSP in communities where at least 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Summer EBT helps families with eligible school-aged children buy food during the summer.

These resources can help you connect kids to summer nutrition programs:

- Use our flyers and outreach toolkit to promote summer meals and Summer EBT in your community.
- **Summer meal sponsors:** Promote summer meals using free pop-up tents, banners, yard signs, and

outreach resources from the New York State Education Department. [Place your order](#) at least four weeks before you need it.

For more sponsor resources, check out this [dedicated sponsor newsletter](#). If you're a community-based organization interested in more outreach materials, please see this [partner newsletter](#).

New Data: Impacts of Expanded Free School Meals in NY

New York has dramatically expanded access to free school meals through state investments that maximize the [Community Eligibility Provision](#) (CEP). This federal program allows eligible schools to offer free school meals to all students. [New survey findings](#) from Hunger Solutions New York reveal the transformative impact of this expansion on students, families and schools across the state.

Hunger Solutions New York surveyed 420 parents and 227 school professionals in New York schools with and without access to free school meals for all. The findings make a powerful case for universal free school meals: **87 percent of parents support this policy, and a majority of school professionals report its benefits in the classroom and beyond.**

Stories that show the real-life impact of CEP are critical to protecting this program and ensuring our state's students have the food they need to thrive. **Thank you to those who participated!**

[Read More About Our Findings](#)

Attention Schools: CEP Application Deadline is June 30

Now is the time for schools to take a fresh look at the [Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\)](#). In New York State, all schools participating in CEP receive full reimbursement for all meals served through the [CEP State Subsidy](#). While 99% of eligible schools in New York participate in CEP, some schools still may need to take action:

- **Consider reapplying to renew your CEP four-year cycle.** An increased identified student percentage is an important opportunity to reapply for CEP. Doing so will maximize federal reimbursements for an additional four years and help sustain New York's CEP State Subsidy. Schools can reapply during the annual application period at any point in their four-year cycle. [Learn more here.](#)
- **Assess potential eligibility to adopt or expand CEP:** Eligibility is based on the percentage of identified students calculated using enrollment as of April 1 and the current school year's direct

certification data. A [list of potentially eligible schools](#) is available on the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) Child Nutrition Program Administration website.

- **Apply or reapply before the deadline, June 30:** NYSED is **now accepting applications for CEP**. Visit their website to review the [CEP application and instructions](#).

Need individualized help? Reach out to Francesca.DiGiorgio@HungerSolutionsNY.org.

WIC Partners: Take Our Survey

If you work with young children and their families, we want to hear from you. Please take our [WIC partnership survey](#) to help us understand how community partners refer families to WIC and how we can reach more eligible families through partnership activities. At the end of this 5-10 minute survey, you can opt into a raffle to win a \$50 gift card!

Take the WIC Survey

ICYMI: Spring Resource Round Up

New Article: 'Schools as Partners Against Hunger' in *Fresh Bites*

Catch up on Hunger Solutions New York's recent contribution to [Fresh Bites](#), the New York School Nutrition Association's flagship publication. Our team shares how schools can serve as partners against hunger and our latest resources and strategies to expand critical nutrition programming during the summer and next school year. The full article is on page 25.

Feed More Kids with Breakfast in the Classroom: Live Q&A with SED

Hunger Solutions New York and No Kid Hungry New York recently hosted the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Child Nutrition Program Administration for a Q&A discussion on strategies to feed more kids by serving Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) and tips for strong program integrity. [Watch the recording](#).

Leveraging the Non-Congregate Meal Option: Promising Practices to Extend Your Reach

Hunger Solutions New York and No Kid Hungry New York's latest [webinar](#) features an overview of the rural non-congregate summer meals flexibility. The non-congregate option, which allows for grab-and-go or

home-delivered meals, offers the opportunity to expand the reach of your summer meals program and meet the unique needs of rural communities. You won't want to miss School Nutrition Director Caitlin Lazarski share about her experiences implementing this permanent flexibility. [Watch the recording](#).

Advocating for School Meals: What's Happening at the Federal and State Levels and How to Get Involved

Hunger Solutions New York and New York School Nutrition Association recently hosted a webinar about school meal proposals at the federal level and how they intersect with New York's push toward a statewide universal school meals policy. Learn about resources available and ways you can get involved to protect school meal access and funding. [View the slides](#).

From Our Partners:

No Kid Hungry New York

[Non-Congregate Summer Meals 101: A Guide for New York Child Nutrition Sponsors](#)

Interested in better understanding rural non-congregate summer meals, but not sure where to start? Check out No Kid Hungry New York's new resource which explains the basics of the non-congregate option, shares where to start, and helps you decide whether non-congregate is right for you.

Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinars

- [Summer Meals: Serving Kid-Friendly, High-Quality Meals](#)
- [Summer Meals: Promotion and Outreach](#)

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