# Attachment B, Memo 085-19

# April 12, 2019

# ADA Compliant Version

## Summer Meals

## School Outreach Toolkit

As educators, you know the critical role nutrition plays in fueling academic success. Children are at a higher risk for hunger during the summer when they lose access to school meals, threatening their cognitive and physical development. Summer Meals Programs can bridge the hunger gap by providing free, nutritious meals to kids where they live, learn, and play when school is not in session.

Schools are essential partners in the effort to expand access to each and every child in need. We need your help to make sure that all kids, teens, and families know about summer meals and benefit from the programs this summer.

On average, 15 percent of kids who receive free or reduced-price lunches get a summer meal.

### What are Summer Meals?

They are free meals provided to kids and teens 18 years old and younger during the summer months. Sponsoring organizations receive federal reimbursements to serve these meals and snacks. Summer meals sponsors can be schools, camps, governmental entities, and private non-profit organizations.

In Virginia, the majority of students who receive free or reduced-price lunches during the school year do not receive a summer meal. A large part of the problem is awareness. According to a national survey of low-income families, less than 40 percent of families knew where to find a summer meals site. Your school administration, leaders, and teachers are trusted community members who can help increase program awareness.

This toolkit outlines easy action steps and provides templates to grow awareness, helping to increase the number of children who access summer meals.

### Steps for School Leaders to End Childhood Hunger:

Superintendents, principals, teachers, and school leaders play a key role in ensuring that no child goes hungry this summer. Please consider the following ideas and tools to increase awareness of summer meals:

1. Robo Calls and Texts. Use your school’s robo call or text system to inform parents of summer meals sites in your community and provide the meal location text number. See the template robo call on page four and this robo text message:

“Free Summer Meals Are Served in Your Community. Call 1-866-3HUNGRY or text “FOOD” or “COMIDA” to 877-877 to find a site near you.”

1. Letter Home to Parents. Send a letter home to parents before the end of the school year. See page three for a customizable template.
2. End of School Assembly. If your school has an end of the year assembly, consider promoting summer meals during the event.
3. Kickoff Event. If your school will be sponsoring a summer meals site or is connected with a site in your community, help boost awareness by hosting a summer kickoff event.
4. Web site Button. Add a summer meals [Web Button](https://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks) (such as the one above) to your school’s homepage and link to [Find Summer Meals in Your Community](https://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks).
5. Social Media. Parents and kids often get important information through social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Use these platforms to inform your community about local summer meals sites and service times.
6. Flyers and Signage. Post flyers, signs, banners, and yard signs in your community, and ask partner groups to help you spread the word. Visit the Virginia Department of Education’s Office of School Nutrition Program summer meals web site to download ready-made digital marketing files.

### Template Letter to Parents:

Customize this letter to parents to announce your summer meals program. See the “School-Based Outreach” section of the Sodexo Foundation Summer Meals Outreach Toolkit for more tips.

[DATE]

Dear Parents or Guardians,

For many kids, summertime means food, friends, and fun. For families who count on school breakfast and lunch however, the summer months can be stressful when family food budgets have to stretch even further. Free summer meals, funded by the USDA, are available to kids and teens ages 18 and younger at summer meals sites across Virginia.

Many summer meals sites offer fun learning and recreational activities so kids and teens can eat a healthy meal while staying active and being with friends. Sites are also registered with the USDA and are held at safe local places like schools, churches, and community centers.

Free Summer Meal Program Details:

* Meals are FREE to children and teens ages 18 and younger who come to a summer meals site.
* Free summer meals will help families save money and stretch their already tight food budgets.
* Food served is healthy and follows USDA nutrition guidelines.
* Summer meals sites are at fun, safe places for kids and teens to be active and visit with friends.
* No application or proof of income needed. You can just bring your child to a summer meals site in your community.

[IF YOUR COMMUNITY OFFERS MOBILE MEALS OR TRANSPORTATION TO SITES, INCLUDE HERE.]

If you or someone you know is interested, call 1-866-3HUNGRY or text “FOOD” to 877-877 to find a site near you.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

### Template Robo Call:

Following are 30-second and 60-second template radio public service announcement (PSA) scripts that you can customize and adapt for a robo call to parents.

#### 30 Second Script

Summer should be a stress-free time full of food, friends, and fun. Free summer meals can help! Any child or teen age 18 and under can get free healthy meals at safe locations across the area. Many meals sites also offer learning and recreational activities so your kids can stay active and spend time with friends. Free summer meals can also help families save money. Go to the [USDA Summer Meals website](http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks) or text “FOOD” to 877-877 to find a site near you. Summer meals programs are administered by the Virginia Department of Education and are funded by the USDA.

#### 60 Second Script

Summer should be a stress-free time full of food, friends, and fun. But when school’s out, that also means that families can’t count on their kids eating meals at school, and already tight family food budgets have to be stretched even further. Free summer meals can help! With FREE summer meals, any child or teen 18 and under can get free healthy meals at safe locations just like during the school year. No application is needed. Just go to the [USDA Summer Meals web site](http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks) or text “FOOD” to 877-877 to find a site near you. The free summer meals programs not only saves you money, but you know your kids are getting the healthy meals they need every day in a safe, supervised place. And besides, it’s an opportunity for them to be spend time with friends. Just go to http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks or text “FOOD” to 877-877 to find a site near you. Summer meals programs are administered by the Virginia Department of Education and funded by the USDA.

### Template FAQs about Summer Meals:

Customize these FAQs about summer meals to announce your summer meals program. Use this information on your web site and in materials to provide more information about these programs. See the “Outreach Tactics” section of the Sodexo Foundation Summer Meals Outreach Toolkit for more tips.

1. Who funds free summer meals?

Summer meals programs are funded by the USDA through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO). Sponsors are reimbursed for the number of meals served. The Summer Meals Programs are administered by the Virginia Department of Education.

1. What are the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO)?

The SFSP and SSO are designed to provide healthy meals to kids and teens 18 years old and under in the summer months when school is not in session. Schools, camps, governmental entities, and private non-profit organizations can be sponsors through the SFSP. Schools can operate the SSO in a streamlined approach through the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.

1. What are the requirements for my child or teen to receive a meal?

Do I have to fill out an application form? There is no application necessary to receive a meal and you do not have to show proof of income or identification. Kids and teens 18 years old and younger can just show up at an open summer meal site during the site’s hours of operation to receive a meal.

1. Is there a cost?

No. All summer meals offered through the USDA’s programs are COMPLIMENTARY for all kids and teens ages 18 and younger.

1. How do I find a meal site in my community?

Summer meals sites are located at safe, supervised places like churches, schools and community centers. Starting in June, text FOOD to 877-877 or call 1-866-3HUNGRY to find a site and learn more information.

1. What kind of food is served at these sites?

SFSP and SSO meals are healthy and meet USDA nutrition guidelines. An example lunch consists of a turkey sandwich on wheat bread, milk, an apple, and a salad.

1. Do summer meal sites offer activities?

Many sites offer fun learning and recreational activities in a safe, supervised environment. Call or visit the feeding site to learn more.

1. There is no site in my area. What can I do to be sure that one is available for the children in my area next summer?

If there are no summer meals sites in your community, we can HELP. Contact Sarah Steely, No Kid Hungry Virginia Program Manager, at Sarah.Steely@doe.virginia.gov or (570) 854-5023.

1. What else can I do to help?

You can share information about free summer meals with your friends, neighbors, family members, and local youth services organizations.

### Stay Connected through Social Media:

Use your school’s social media platforms to communicate about summer meals and connect with meal sponsors and site in your community.

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs is committed to your success! Share your stories, successes, and events with us on social media. Visit our web site at for up-to-date information, best practice resources, grants, blogs, and more! Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @VDOE\_SNP.

Share the following phrases and facts on you school web site and various social media platforms.

* Did you know that families who participate in the National School Lunch Program can benefit from free meals for children during the summer months? Join us for lunch this #summer or to text FOOD to 877-877 to find #summermeals in your community!
* The @USDA Summer Meals Programs provides meals to children 18 years and younger when school is out! Come eat with us at [location] on [date, time]. #SummerFoodRocks
* Text ‘FOOD’ to 877-877 to find food, friends and fun near you!
* On average, only 15 percent of kids who depend on school meals during the school year receive #summermeals. Let’s change that this summer!
* Summer is the hungriest time of the year for millions of kids. Parents & kids can find free #summermeals in their neighborhood by texting FOOD to 877-877.
* Food, fun and friends – all for free! We provide nutritious meals to children at our school all summer long.
* Join us for another day of #healthy meals today at [school, time]!

Below is a list of partner organizations. “Follow” and “like” these organizations to build a stronger social network and online community of summer feeding advocates.

| **Agency/Organization** | **Twitter** | **Instagram** | **Facebook** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Virginia Department of Education | @VDOESNP | VDOESNP | VDOESNP |
| No Kid Hungry Virginia | @NoKidHungryVA | NoKidHungryVA | No Kid Hungry Virginia |
| Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth | @VFHY | n/a | Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth |
| No Kid Hungry | @NoKidHungry | NoKidHungry | No Kid Hungry |
| United States Department of Agriculture | @USDANutrition | USDAGov | USDA |
| Action for Healthy Kids | @ActionForHealthyKids | Act4HealthyKids | Action for Healthy Kids |
| The Alliance for a Healthier Generation | @HealthierGen | HealthierGeneration | The Alliance for a Healthier Generation |
| Food Research and Action Center | @FRACTweets | n/a | Food Research and Action Center |
| Library of Virginia | @LibraryofVA | LibraryofVA | Library of VA |

Consider incorporating these official summer meals hashtags into your posts:

* #SummerFoodRocks
* #WellReadWellFed
* #SummerMealsVA
* #SummerNutrition

### Additional Resources:

There are many resources available to help identify existing summer meals sites and potential areas of expansion in your community.

* [VDOE Summer Meals Web site](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/programs/sfsp.shtml). Learn more about the Summer Meals program and contact the Office of School Nutrition Programs with questions.
* [Share Our Strength Sodexo Foundation Summer Meals Outreach Toolkit](http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/programs/summer-meals/promote-summer-meals#summer-meals-outreach-resource-toolkit). Contains instructions and templates to help you spread the word about summer meals in your division and community.
* [USDA Capacity Builder](https://www.fns.usda.gov/capacitybuilder). Visualize data, such as underserved areas, and identify locations for new summer meals sites. Determines if census tracts in your area are eligible for the Summer Meals Program and other federal nutrition programs.
* [USDA Summer Meals Toolkit](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit). Provides creative ideas and resources to make Summer Meal planning easy, raise awareness, overcome barriers, and serve nutritious food that is appealing to children.

For more information, additional marketing materials, and to obtain a list of summer meals sites specific to your school community, please contact Sarah Steely, No Kid Hungry Virginia Senior Program Manager at Sarah.Steely@doe.virginia.gov or (570) 854-5023.

JFL/SCC/lj