

## Philip Qualman

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2020

### **Free lunch extended for the rest of the school year**

*USDA's unwavering commitment ensures all children have access to nutritious food as the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic*

**Eagle, CO** – The Eagle County School District announced today that the USDA has extended its free lunch program for K-12 students from the end of the calendar year to the end of the school year. This unprecedented move ensures that all K-12 students have nutritious meals wherever they are and however they are learning. All K-12 students are eligible, not just those who qualify for Free and Reduced Meals. Nutritional support for preschool children is handled under a different program. Preschool families should inquire with their service providers to learn if similar programs are available to them.

In a press release, US Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue said, “We are grateful for the heroic efforts by our school food service professionals who are consistently serving healthy meals to kids during these trying times, and we know they need maximum flexibility right now.”

The flexibility Perdue speaks of allows free meals to all K-12 students learning in-person and curbside pickup for all students learning remotely via an extension of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) to provide no-cost meals to all K-12 children, available at over 90,000 sites across the country, through June 30, 2021. Adjustments for flexibility include:

- Allowing SFSP and SSO meals to be served in all areas and at no cost;
- Permit meals to be served outside of the typically required group settings and meal times;
- Waive meal pattern requirements, as necessary; and
- Allow parents and guardians to pick-up meals for their children.
- Program does not include preschool students.

These program modifications allow schools to operate a meal service model that best meets their community's unique needs while keeping kids and staff safe.

Currently, parents interested in picking up lunches for students learning from home should order through the SchoolCafé app (available for iPhone and Android) or online at

**pho: 970 328-6321 fax: 970 328-1024**

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eagleschools.net/lunches or at schoolcafe.com. Those without access to the app or an internet connection can call their school to order a meal for pick up.

Orders must be placed by 1:30 p.m. the DAY BEFORE the order is needed.

“Last March, our nutritional services team made a quick and remarkable adjustment to ensure students had meals every day,” said Superintendent Philip Qualman. “Staff and volunteers endured all weather conditions to pass out lunches and the community was both grateful and proud of their efforts. This year, we know what to expect and will be ready should a similar situation arise again.”

### **If ECSD transitions to Remote Learning**

In the event Eagle County Schools has to transition to full remote district-wide, meals will still be available to K-12 students. The district will prepare meals at EVHS and BMHS and deliver meals to each school. Each school will have its own serving site for their students. Serving times will be from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every day at all schools. Breakfast and lunch will be available at all schools during the pickup window. Food will be sent home cold to be reheated by families.

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