

## Free Meals for Kids Mobile App to Access School Meals During Closure

### **UPDATE – April 10, 2020**

*More than 840 sites across Minnesota are now included on the App, which has had more than 3,500 visits. The list of sites providing free meals and meal packs is updated daily as more communities develop creative ways to get meals to kids during this tough time.*

**Minneapolis, MN (March 26, 2020)** — With schools moving to distance learning, free nutritious school meals for kids 18 and under are only a click away. Starting immediately, the Free Meals for Kids mobile App will help kids and families in need find and access free meals at hundreds of schools and other sites across Minnesota.



The App, powered by GPS, shows locations of schools and other sites that are providing meals and meal packs, with days and hours for distribution. It also shows the distance and directions to the nearest site.

"While this is an uncertain time, we don't want our families to feel uncertain about our commitment to support them. For many families, the meals served at school may be the only meals that their students have during the week," said Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker. "This App is a great tool to help families locate sites that are providing free meals, which include many school sites."

Many of the schools and other sites are using creative methods to make free meals available to kids. They are finding ways to decrease social exposures and reduce the time and transportation burden for families by providing multiple days' worth of meals, allowing for drive-through pickup, or coordinating meal deliveries.

"This is the time when the technology of a mobile App can help the most," said Ellie Lucas, executive director of Hunger Impact Partners, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit that created the App. "As communities develop creative ways to distribute meals, an App like this can provide a central, up-to-date resource for families to feed their kids."

The App is free at the Apple App and the Google Play stores. The list of schools and other sites providing meals is updated daily. To include your site on the App, please email Lauren Kraft at [lkraft@hungerimpactpartners.org](mailto:lkraft@hungerimpactpartners.org).

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### **About MN Dept. of Education**

The Minnesota Department of Education provides an excellent education for Minnesota students by striving for excellence, equity, and opportunity. They focus on closing the achievement gap, supporting high-quality teaching, using innovative strategies to improve educational outcomes, and ensuring all students graduate from high school well-prepared for college, career and life. The Minnesota Department of Education develops, builds, and maintains collaborative relationships with schools, districts, and other stakeholders through a wide variety of advisory boards, councils and committees.

### **About Hunger Impact Partners**

Hunger Impact Partners, a 501c3, works to change the trajectory of child hunger by improving access to and participation in under-utilized federal child nutrition programs for the 479,805 eligible Minnesota kids. Experts in hunger-relief, data analysis, community collaboration and policy solutions, the organization focuses on closing the meal gap for all low-income children birth to 18 so they can realize their full potential. [www.hungerimpactpartners.org](http://www.hungerimpactpartners.org)



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