# WV Department of Education and Counties Open 500 Sites to Feed Children

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Office of Child Nutrition has worked with all 55 counties to open sites to feed children this week. Starting tomorrow, Monday, March 16, counties will begin to open more than 500 sites around the state to ensure children who require school breakfasts and lunches will receive meals during the statewide school closure caused by the Coronavirus (COVID19) threat.

Last week, WVDE received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture allowing counties flexibility to feed students in non-congregant settings during unanticipated school closures. Upon Governor Jim Justice's announcement on Friday, March 13, 2020, to close all pre-k–12 schools to reduce the potential impact of the disease, the WVDE began the process of getting plans finalized and sites approved so that meal distribution can begin Monday. Both Governor Justice and Superintendent W. Clayton Burch have said child nutrition is a top priority during the closure.

The amount of work that was done over a 48-hour period usually requires months of planning. However, Superintendent Burch, his leadership team and the Office of Child Nutrition worked throughout the weekend with counties to prepare for distribution on Monday. Plans range from feeding sites to school buses delivering meals to bus stops and other locations.

To date, West Virginia is the only state in the country with no confirmed cases of COVID19. An information hotline for COVID-19 has been established and operators are available 24/7, toll-free at 1-800-887-4304. For the most up to date information, please visit www.coronavirus.wv.gov or wvde.us/COVID19.

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