MDE Granted Federal Waiver for Meals to be Served During Closure

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No. 012 – March 13, 2020

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LANSING, MICH. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has granted the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) request to waive the regulatory requirement that children eat meals together and at schools during unanticipated school closures. This waiver takes immediate effect.

These meals, served under the program called Unanticipated School Closure SFSP, are available to all children at no cost. Under the waiver, the meals would not be required to be served in a group setting. This waiver assists Michigan's school food service staff to make sure kids receive nutritious meals during the school closure announced by Governor Gretchen Whitmer March 12, 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

This waiver allows providers of school meals to explore other options for serving meals to students during this time. These options, such as allowing parents and children to pick up meals at a designated location or delivering meals to school bus stops, are meant to support the "social distancing" recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to help stem the spread of COVID-19 and to help local school districts provide food to children in need at the same time.

Schools and sponsors that participate in Unanticipated School Closure SFSP help ensure children do not experience a lapse in food security with schools being closed from March 16, 2020, through April 5, 2020.

No sponsor or school district needs to request a waiver.

For questions about Michigan's summer meals program or about Unanticipated School Closure, schools can contact MDE at 517-241-5374 or mde-sfsp@michigan.gov.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

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