

Representative Doherty & Senator Wagner,

Here is a quick summary of the ODE's COVID Response efforts:

- Created a [widely utilized website](#) that includes a [FAQ section](#) (with questions spanning 15 categories). The [website](#) also has links to all 12 updates Director Gill has sent to superintendents and principals and 10 other documents supporting school districts as they address COVID-19 challenges.
- ODE applied to the USED for a waiver from federal assessment and accountability requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act. ODE has received pre-authorization. This request is open for public comment until 5:00 PM today.
- We are collecting and responding to statewide inquiries via the [COVID-19 inbox](#).
- Amplifying messaging from Governor's office and Oregon Health Authority via [ODE's Twitter feed](#).
- The Early Learning Division is [issuing guidance and support](#) to childcare providers and families, and helping facilitate the Governor's emergency provision for schools to provide childcare for essential health care professionals and first responders.
- The Offices of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Enhancing Student Opportunities researching available waivers and determining what we can provide schools and districts in the way of instructional guidance, resources and relief. Guidance around high school graduation requirements, assessment, supplemental education and learning supports, mental health and social support will be released this month.
- Government and Legal Affairs team organized a fully virtual and public State Board Meeting on March 19.
- Human Resources facilitating accommodations and safety measures for ODE staff in relating to Governor Brown's *Stay home, save lives* executive order.
- Director Colt Gill providing constant and consistent communication to school leaders and partners across the state.
- Child Nutrition staff received waivers from federal government to serve students and worked to approve hundreds of Oregon schools to distribute meals during the school closures and ensure other programs receive their USDA commodities.
- ODE created a webpage that provides direct links to each school district's webpage with info on sites providing meals during school closures. There could be a few more sites that the agency is not aware of, but you'll see most districts are providing meals. We are currently working on updating any inactive links on the site. This was completed with help from Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon. Again, here is the direct link: <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Pages/COVID-19-Food-Resources.aspx>
- USDA hosts a Summer Food Rocks website that provides site locations for SFSP and SSO sites operated during the summer. It's only active during the summer. However, USDA will be activating the site during school closures due to the coronavirus. We will be submitting our

information from our system to USDA. Our hope is the site will be live beginning Monday, March 23, but I can't confirm. Here is the link: <https://www.summerfoodrocks.org/>

You also asked about waiver applications for food distribution. This is more information than asked but I think it provides helpful information for you and Senator Wagner:

- Waiver request to operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO) during unanticipated school closures at school sites
 - a. Purpose: This waiver allows school districts to operate the SFSP or SSO during an unanticipated school closure at a school site. Current regulations only allow SFSP or SSO to be operated at non-school sites during an unanticipated school closures.
 - b. Impact: This waiver would increase access to nutritious meals that can be reimbursed through school sites during an unanticipated school closure
 - c. Status: **Approved**
- Waiver request to operate SFSP/SSO non-congregate feeding for sponsors operating during COVID-19 unanticipated school closures
 - a. Purpose: This waiver allows all SFSP or SSO sponsors to serve non-congregate meals during unanticipated school closures. Essentially, this would allow students to receive a meal and be consumed elsewhere. Current regulations only allow meals to be served in a congregate setting.
 - b. Impact: This waiver would improve access to nutritious meals that can be reimbursed and prevent the exposure/spread of COVID-19 by allowing children and students to consume meals in non-congregate settings
 - c. Status: **Approved**
- Waiver request to waive meal time restrictions in SFSP/SSO during unanticipated school closures.
 - a. Purpose: This waiver removes the restriction of a minimum time to elapse between meal services in SFSP and SSO. Current regulations require that three hours must elapse between the beginning of one meal service and the beginning of another.
 - b. Impact: This waiver would allow two meals to be provided at the same meal service and be reimbursed
 - c. Status: **Approved**
- Waiver request to waive the first week site visit for returning SFSP sites that have operated successfully in the previous year
 - a. Purpose: This waiver removes the requirement that returning SFSP sites must conduct a first week visit. Current regulations require that returning SFSP sites must have a site visit completed in the first week
 - b. Impact: This waiver would eliminate the burden of completing a first week site visit
 - c. Status: **Approved**
- Waiver request to waive the area-eligibility requirement for SFSP and SSO
 - a. Purpose: This waiver eliminates the requirement that a site be area eligible. Current regulations require that for a site to be eligible for SFSP or SSO, the

site must be located in a school attendance area where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

- b. Impact: This waiver would increase the number of sites that can participate on SFSP and SSO and be reimbursed for meals offered.
- c. Status: ***Submitted to USDA on March 16. USDA still reviewing. Not yet approved***

- While not waivers, USDA has also approved the following (this is high level detail):
 - School Food Authorities approved to operate SFSP or SSO sites can claim meals directly served to children's homes
 - Meals can be offered and claimed through the SFSP, SSO or the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program if school facilities are closed but schools continue to operate

USDA is now allowing reimbursement during planned Spring Break dates and unanticipated school closure dates. What follows is more technical information that either a nutrition manager in your district or ODE can help you further digest if needed.

The four important headlines are: a) Sponsors can claim meals offered during spring break, b) SSO and SFSP sponsors can serve and claim breakfast and lunch if/when offered at the same time, c) School Food Authority sponsors of SFSP and SSO sites can claim meals directly served to children's homes, and d) Meals can be offered and claimed through the SFSP/SSO or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)/School Breakfast Program (SBP) if school facilities are closed but schools continue to operate.

Here's the details for each:

a) Sponsors can claim meals offered during spring break

Sponsors have options to qualify for reimbursement by offering meals during school closures. Sponsors may claim reimbursement for meals approved under Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and Summer Food School Program (SFSP) during a scheduled spring break that was canceled or postponed due to a unanticipated school closure resulting from the coronavirus.

b) SSO and SFSP sponsors can serve and claim breakfast and lunch if/when offered at the same time

This was originally approved for SFSP sponsors only. USDA provided approval for SSO sponsors as well.

c) School Food Authority sponsors of SFSP and SSO sites can claim meals directly served to children's homes

- Schools that have been approved for non-congregate feeding through SFSP or SSO may be reimbursed for meals delivered directly to children's homes.
- Schools electing to deliver meals may serve only children who are in area eligible locations or who are eligible for free or reduced price meals.
- Schools operating a closed-enrolled site may enroll children who are certified as eligible for free or reduced price meals, and deliver meals only to the enrolled, eligible children.
- Delivery may include more than one meal, e.g. a breakfast and a lunch, per delivery location as ODE CNP previously received USDA approval to waive mealtime restrictions in SFSP and SSO
- Delivery may include meals for multiple days, up to one week at a time.
- When meals are delivered, children do NOT need to be present at the time of delivery as long as the school has obtained written consent from households that they want to receive delivered meals.

d) Meals can be offered and claimed through the SFSP/SSO or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)/School Breakfast Program (SBP) if school facilities are closed but schools continue to operate.

- SFSP/SSO option - If school buildings are closed unexpectedly during the school year due to COVID-19, USDA considers this an unanticipated school closure. Even if the district is operating or providing online school, if the building is closed and students cannot attend their physical school location for classes, SFAs and community organizations (COs) may operate SFSP and SSO programs as permitted under program requirements.
- NSLP/SBP option - If an SFA considers a school to be operating and wishes to continue offering NSLP and SBP during such building closures, non-congregate meals can be offered. Schools would continue to claim and be reimbursed for meals based on the eligibility status of the individual student. All other NSLP and SBP requirements would apply

All of the above guidance can be located here: [COVID-19 Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\) and Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\) Meal Delivery Using Existing Authority](#)

Please let me know if you need additional information. I believe this information can also help inform the original [questions posed](#). You are welcome to share this with LPRO staff. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

- Jessica