

While the start of the school year looks a little different for everyone, I wanted to share with you some good news that schools nationwide received last week. The USDA extended a waiver that allows schools to serve **free breakfast and lunch to ALL students, through 12/31/20**. We are thrilled with this news as it means that we will be able to provide all Abington students with nutritious and nourishing food for free that will support them, both in school and at home.

What this means for your family and for Abington students –

- Your children, ages 4-18, will receive the opportunity to have a healthy breakfast and lunch every school day, at no cost, in a safe and welcoming environment. This applies to students who are attending classes in school or virtual classes at home, or a hybrid combination of these models.
- You may pick up meals for your children who are remote learners at designated schools or other meal sites that are distributing meals. **Please see locations and schedules below.**
- If your children have never participated in school meals, consider trying the program this year!
- It helps you save time and money. By allowing us to prepare meals for your children you don't have to plan and shop for your children's breakfast and lunch each school day.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has requested that the USDA extend free meals for all students for the **entire** school year. However, as of now, the USDA has only allowed this through December 31. Therefore, families should still submit a household application to determine eligibility for free or reduced price school meals. This will also allow students to qualify for any additional benefits and ensure a seamless transition when schools move back to a paid program (if the waiver is not extended for January to June 2021). The application is available to download on the Food Services page of the Abington Public Schools website.

In addition, we also encourage families to apply for SNAP benefits. SNAP provides monthly cash benefits (on an EBT card) to purchase groceries for eligible families. To apply for SNAP, visit [www.startwithsnap.org](http://www.startwithsnap.org), or call the Project Bread Food Source Hotline at 1-800-645-8333.

If you are unsure whether your family is eligible, the Food Source Hotline can assist you with eligibility questions. Families approved for SNAP are directly eligible to receive free meals at school and do not need to fill out an application for free or reduced price meals.

An additional local resource is:

**ABINGTON FOOD PANTRY**  
455 Plymouth Street, Abington, MA

The Abington Food Pantry is open to Abington residents on Tuesday evenings from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

All Abington residents are welcome. Please bring an ID and proof of residency in the form of a utility bill, a lease, or some similar form of recent mail. The Pantry is run on a strict, confidential basis. Due to the Covid situation, we are currently running with drive through procedures. Clients should pull into the parking lot and get into the car line and pull up to the window. Our volunteers will place the food in your vehicles for you.

If you are new, you will fill out a confidential registration form and be processed that night. We are located at the Friary Bldg (The long tan building on the right-hand side of the parking lot) of St. Bridget's Church. Should you have questions, The Abington Food Pantry can be reached at **(781) 878-1194**.

#### **ABINGTON SCHOOL MEAL INFORMATION**

**Breakfast will be available to in person students at Beaver Brook and Woodsdale School. Middle School and High School will not be serving breakfast. Lunch will be available to all in person students at all schools. Any meal not available to students in our buildings will be available via weekly drive up/pick up.**

**Here are the schedules of distribution and locations:**

**PLEASE NOTE: THESE SCHEDULES WILL BEGIN MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020**

**Virtual Academy Students:**

For students participating in Virtual Academy we will provide 5 complete breakfast meals and 5 lunch meals. They can be picked up by the rear door of Middle School (student drop off door) on Wednesday between 10:30AM and 11:00AM. Participation in this program is free and voluntary.

**Cohort WAVE Students:**

For students in school on Thursday and Friday (Cohort WAVE) we will provide 3-5 complete breakfast meals (depending on your school) and 3 lunch meals outside your child's school on Mondays.

**Beaver Brook:** 10:00AM to 10:30AM by door "B" (student drop off door)

**Woodsdale:** 10:00AM to 10:30AM by front door (student drop off door)

**MS/HS** 9:30AM to 10:00AM by the rear door of Middle School (student drop off door)

**Cohort GREEN Students:**

For students in school on Monday and Tuesday (Cohort GREEN) we will provide 3-5 complete breakfast meals (depending on your school) and 3 lunch meals outside your child's school on Wednesdays.

**Beaver Brook:** 10:00AM to 10:30AM by door "B" (student drop off door)

**Woodsdale:** 10:00AM to 10:30AM by front door (student drop off door)

**MS/HS** 9:30AM to 10:00AM by the rear door of Middle School (student drop off door)

**Please reach out with any questions you might have. Your children are the reason we do our jobs and we are here to make sure that they are fueled with good food!**

Food Services can be reached at [berniedarcy@abingtonps.org](mailto:berniedarcy@abingtonps.org) or 781-982-2156