

September 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Staff,

I hope all is well and you have survived the first 7 days of school. The students have demonstrated genuine enthusiasm, excitement, and joy to be back at school. More importantly, they have complied with all the safety protocols we have in place. Thanks to all of you, our parents and caregivers, for working behind the scenes to ensure students understand the importance of maintaining safety measures for the well-being of our school community members.

Our teachers have been extraordinary, as I am sure you have noticed. In my rounds to every school, students are engaged and connected to classroom instruction and to their peers. As you know, we are scheduled for K-6 to return to school in full on October 5<sup>th</sup> – as the health indicators continue to be positive.

Some great news: The State of Connecticut has accepted our application to continue with the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for free lunch through December 31 (or until the State funding runs out). *Starting on Monday, September 21st, all students and their siblings under the age of 18, regardless of income level, are eligible for one FREE lunch per day.* Students attending in-person classes at Newtown High School will also be eligible for one FREE breakfast per day. The program includes in-school lunch and lunches picked up for remote learners, as well as for students attending either Newtown Community Center or NYA. Another lunch survey will be going out today if you do want to receive a free school lunch (and NHS free breakfast). **If you already completed the previous lunch survey (for both in-person and remote learners), no need to fill it out again. Please review the information on the attached Whitson's Flyer for further details.**

We are beginning to start our committee work across the district. PEAC (Parent Educator Advisory Council) will be meeting again. A meeting schedule will be sent to all members. Our subgroups (Partnerships, Budget, Communication & Branding) will take up where they left off in March and create plans for the school year. In addition, we will be developing a subgroup for *Diversity & Equity*, which will use the BOE Resolution – Promoting Diversity and Equity as a foundation to initiate action steps to meet the social and emotional needs of all students. We would like to invite new members to PEAC, or parents who may simply want to be “contributors” and offer input on various topics throughout the year. PEAC meetings will be virtual at this time and are typically held at 4:15 p.m. on Wednesdays. **The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:15 p.m. If you are interested in either joining PEAC or becoming a contributor, please reach out to Sarah Connell at [connells@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:connells@newtown.k12.ct.us).**

Stay well.

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent

# FOOD SERVICE FREE MEAL PROGRAM



## DEAR NEWTOWN FAMILIES,

We are very happy to announce that the State Department of Education has approved Newtown Public Schools' application to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) meal program. Starting on Monday, **September 21st 2020**, all our students and their siblings under the age of 18, regardless of income level, are eligible for one FREE lunch per day! Students attending in-person classes only at Newtown High School will be eligible for one FREE breakfast per day!



**What does this mean?** Students will be able to pick up ONE free lunch per day per student. Beginning on Monday, no charges will be processed for any meals served, whether the meals are served at school or picked up daily (for students on remote learning). All Newtown students and siblings under the age of 18 are eligible for these free meals. You do not need to have been approved for the traditional free or reduced meal program.

**What is in a free meal?** All five components (protein, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk) will be served in the meal. Students will have daily and weekly alternates based on the monthly menu. Menus can be accessed online through FD Meal Planner: <https://www.fdmealplanner.com/#Newtown> or on the Newtown Public Schools Website.

### Remote Learning and Hybrid Remote Days

Remote learning students are eligible for curbside pick up of a FREE lunch meal from 9:15-12:15pm on Monday's and Wednesday's at Newtown Middle School OR Newtown High School. Parents and students are advised to pre-order prior to pick up.



Please note that the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) meal program is **temporary until December 31st, 2020 and is subject to the availability of funding**. Once this waiver ends, students will return to their eligibility status (Paid, Free or Reduced). Parents must submit a free and reduced-priced school meal application to determine if your family may qualify for benefits when the free meal waiver ends. Applications materials are available on the Newtown Public Schools website.

Again, this program is currently scheduled to end on December 31st, 2020 or sooner if the USDA funding runs out. We will keep families informed as to the ending date once we are notified. In the meantime, we are happy to provide balanced, nutritious meals to all students at no charge!



Please direct any questions to the Director of Food Services Joseph Stango

E: [stangoj@whitsons.com](mailto:stangoj@whitsons.com)

P: (203)426-7637

Please direct any eligibility or application questions to Jacki Kulikowski

E: [kulikowskij@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:kulikowskij@newtown.k12.ct.us)

P: (203)426-6134