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MDE Seeking Providers for 2014 Summer Food Service Program

Roseville – During the school year, many Minnesota families depend on free or reduced-price meals their children get at school to provide nourishment. When school is out, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) bridges the “nutrition gap.”

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is looking for organizations to sponsor the 2014 SFSP and provide free meals to Minnesota children 18 and under during the summer when school is out. There are many underserved areas in need of a sponsor to operate a summer feeding site, especially in greater Minnesota. Sponsors receive training, technical assistance and reimbursement for providing meals to children 18 and under in areas of economic need.

“Healthy students are more attentive and ready to learn,” said Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius. “The Summer Food Service Program guarantees our low-income children will not lose access to the nutritious meals they receive during the regular school year. I encourage schools, park and recreation programs, faith-based organizations and other nonprofit organizations that provide educational and recreational activities for children during the summer to offer meals through the Summer Food Service Program.”

Program sites are often located at local schools, recreation and community centers, parks and other locations operated by youth, cultural and faith-based organizations. In 2013, the SFSP had over 625 sites operated by 149 sponsors. These sites served almost 2.4 million meals to children, a 7.7 percent increase from 2012. No registration is required and there is no cost to children or families.

A sponsoring organization must be a:

- public or nonprofit private school food authority;
- public or nonprofit private residential summer camp;
- unit of local, municipal, county or state government; or a
- public or nonprofit college or university.

Interested schools and nonprofit organizations may register their interest by submitting the Interest Survey for New Participants. [Complete the survey.](#)

An informational session called Essentials of Summer and At-Risk Afterschool Meals for Youth will be held on Friday, February 14, 2014 from 9 a.m.-noon at the Minnesota Department of

Education, Conference Center B, Room 16, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113. Presentations will cover the Summer Food Service Program, Seamless Summer Option and the At-Risk Snack and Meal Programs. [Register online for Essentials of Summer and At-Risk Afterschool Meals for Youth.](#)

Summer Food Service Program Basics Workshops will be held in Roseville, Walker and Marshall during April.

For more information, please contact the Minnesota Department of Education, Food and Nutrition Service at 651-582-8526, 1-800-366-8922 (Minnesota Toll-free) or e-mail mde.fns@state.mn.us.

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