Due to concerns of spreading COVID-19, each school needs to have a plan to feed students while minimizing exposure. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people maintain a 6 foot of separation to practice social distancing. The Michigan Department of Education has gathered the following guidance. Local health departments should be contacted to ensure compliance with local rules and regulations and for additional guidance.

There are many items to consider when deciding how to serve and where to eat meals this fall. The State of Michigan requires lunch and breakfast be served as stated in the Michigan Revised School Code Act 451 of 1976, Section 380.1272a. This information was gathered from a group of food service directors around the state and is intended for use in creating a safe plan for feeding students. When considering feeding students this fall you should also consider the risk level of your community. https://www.mistartmap.info/

**General Guidelines from CDC to consider when planning for the fall:**
- CDC does not recommend using a communal dining hall or cafeteria.
- CDC recommends meals in the classroom
- CDC recommends individual plated meals

### Menu Considerations for all service models

- Write menus that are sustainable within the supply chain.
- Allow menu choices to keep up participation, but limit options to simplify food preparation.
- Pre-packaged, grab and go or bagged meals may help to speed up serving.
- Portability of menu items—including spilling.
- Consider a hot meal and a cold sack lunch option.
- Offer a ‘sides’ bag with fruit and milk ready to go and a hot vegetable on the line.
- Keep emergency menu on hand for unanticipated shut down.
- Minimize self-service options by serving food directly to students.
- Your food distributor or consortia may have a sample menu cycle available.
- Cost out the menu to make sure it is feasible to maintain.
- Expect higher menu cost with additional packaging needed.
- Pre-Ordered meals through web-based system, so kids or parents could order and then come to cafeteria for pick up.
Safety Precautions for all service models

- If cards are used, they need to be cleaned daily and handled by cashier with gloves and returned in a sanitary way back to teacher.
- If keypad is used, it needs to be cleaned between groups.
- May use roster in laminated sheets, cashier scans student name as they come through the line.
- Mark floor with signage to space students in line and direct traffic flow through cafeteria and/or hallway. (See resources for examples for ordering and options)
- Limit sharing of utensils, tools and equipment by staff members.
- **Avoid student self-service stations and salad bars.**
- Common table for condiments and cutlery is discouraged.
- Share tables should not be used.
- Use disposable utensils and dishes for student use.
- Encourage use of individually wrapped food items as feasible and available.
- Create written procedures for new processes and update HACCP Plan.
- Promote online free/reduced applications and direct deposits into meal accounts.


Financial Considerations

- Increased food cost due to individually wrapped items and packaging.
- Decreased participation and revenue is likely.
- Increased labor costs due to higher staffing needs (lower meals per labor hour).
- Consider working with other directors for consolidating purchases and maximizing consortia membership.

Communication

- If serving plans change contact distributor, consortia and MDE.
- Establish email chain with all pertinent people for quick communication.
- Develop a communication plan for staff and parents when food service changes occur.

A La Carte

- Consider eliminating a la carte for elementary students to increase speed of service.
- Limit options at secondary schools to increase speed of service and reduce cash exchanges.
Consider When Serving in the Cafeteria

**Mealtimes**
- Establish multiple meal periods to minimize number of students in the serving area at one time but may still need an adult to manage the number of students at a time.
- Dismiss students by classroom to get meal and then return to classroom to eat.
- Stagger meal periods to allow students to get their food and leave—may be every 5 to 10 minutes.

**Staffing**
- Extra staff may be needed since self-service bars are no longer recommended
- Monitoring may be needed in the cafeteria to ensure students remain distanced
- Follow normal food safety and personal hygiene procedures

**Pre-ordering meals**
- Online ordering system may be used to help increase speed of service
  - INSERT RESOURCES

**Food**
- No buffet type or self-service is recommended
- If self-service is used, items should be individually wrapped

**Equipment**
- Stanchions to direct students to maintain social distance while in line
  - Insert resource
- Floor graphics to assist with social distancing
  - Insert resources
- Plexi glass divider at cashier station
- Ability to have cashless system
- Hand sanitizer at beginning of line

**Keeping students with food allergies safe**
- Continue with current protocols to keep students safe

**Waivers submitted – (waiting for USDA Approval)**
- Waiver request so that potable water is only required when lunch is eaten in the cafeteria
- Mealtime waiver to allow meals served outside of 10 AM-2 PM for social distancing or take-home meals
Consider When Serving in the Classroom

Mealtimes
- Set up meal delivery schedule with set mealtimes for each classroom
- Stagger mealtimes to allow for student handwashing break prior to delivery time
- May work best in elementary schools or smaller secondary schools

Staffing
- Establish who will deliver meals to classrooms or if they will be picked up
  - Students/Teachers/FS Workers/Para Pro’s
- Create a trash collection plan
- Counting/claiming will be done in the classroom and staff will need to be trained on procedures, including Civil Rights

Ordering meals
- Accurate order system in place to have the correct number of meals for each classroom
  - Insert resources
- System for late students to order meal
- Consider “milk only” students when establishing order system

Food
- No buffet type service, food encouraged to be individually packaged
- Transporting hot food and maintaining food safety protocols once food reaches classroom

Equipment
- Equipment needs will be high if school isn’t previously equipped
- Transport vessels to maintain food safety measures
- Point of sale for counting and claiming meals (mobile POS or card system)
- Trash cans
- Spill kits for classrooms

Student hygiene
- Students should be able to wash hands before and after eating
- Sanitation procedure in place for ensuring sanitary eating surface

Keeping students with food allergies safe
- Create a plan for each student based on their food allergies
- The person who is supervising meal service should be trained in food allergies and choking prevention
  - Include resource
- Avoid cross contamination on classroom surfaces
- Do not discriminate against students who have allergies

Waivers submitted – (waiting for USDA Approval)
- Waiver request so that potable water is only required when lunch is eaten in the cafeteria
- Mealtime waiver to allow meals served outside of 10 AM-2 PM for social distancing
Mealtimes
- Establish schedule so students are coming at staggered times to allow for social distancing and allow for handwashing break

Staffing
- Consider how many hallways or areas you can provide service to at the same time to determine staffing needs
- Runner likely will be needed for refills
- Staff must be capable of potentially maneuvering large, heavy carts

Equipment
- Point of sale for counting and claiming meals (mobile POS or card system)
  - Insert resource
- Consider using what you already have – mobile breakfast carts or unused salad bars
  - Other equipment options (insert resource)
- Space on cart to transport all menu items
- Speed racks with covers

Student hygiene
- Students should be able to wash hands before and after eating

Keeping students with food allergies safe
- Create a plan for each student based on their food allergies

Waivers submitted – (waiting for USDA Approval)
- Waiver request so that potable water is only required when lunch is eaten in the cafeteria
- Mealtime waiver to allow meals served outside of 10 AM-2 PM for social distancing or take-home meals