

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROVIDES 2,042,495 MEALS TO DISTRICT STUDENTS DURING 2020

As families lined up at select Paterson Public Schools' buildings to receive packages of food, the District had reached distribution of 2,042,495 student meals. For the past ten months, since March 17th, The District has been providing pre-packaged meals consisting of breakfast and lunch to students and their families.

The meals were initially provided for weekdays, Monday through Friday, but on November 30th the District added weekends as well for a full week's worth of meals. Due to the expanded program, the food distribution schedule changed from Mondays and Wednesdays to Mondays and Thursdays, keeping the hours of 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. The distribution locations have changed few times since the program began, initially started at community locations such as churches and fire stations, but quickly moved to District school buildings after a few weeks. Currently there are eight locations that serve the whole school community, those being P.S. No. 3, P.S. No. 9, P.S. No. 28, the Edward W. Kilpatrick school, P.S. No. 21, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex, and The New Roberto Clemente School.

Of the milestone, Superintendent Shafer said, "I'm very proud and thankful to the volunteers that have come out twice a week, every week since the program started, to help students have access to nutritious food. Our Food Services Department Executive Director, David Buchholtz, and his staff have done an excellent job of organizing the program. We know that families are struggling with the difficulties that the pandemic has forced on them and the District is here to help in anyway that it can, especially to make sure that the students are well fed."

Dave Buchholtz stated, "Serving 2 million meals since March 17th, is surely a milestone, but a bittersweet one at that. It's bitter in the sense that the pandemic is still with us and so many families are struggling with food insecurity, but it is also sweet because the Paterson School District is in the position to help so many families and to give the feeling of normalcy to those in need during these turbulent times."

This week, because of the Holiday Break, food distribution had changed to Monday and Wednesday, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Today, enough meals were distributed for five days, lasting through the 25th. On Wednesday, the 23rd, another five meals will be distributed to last through January 1st. Food distribution will resume on January 4th.

The student meals distribution program will be in service indefinitely until further notice.

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