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Maryland State Department of Education Awards Over \$3.8 Million Dollars to Provide Fresh Fruits and Vegetables for Elementary Students

155 Elementary Schools Participate in Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

BALTIMORE (October 22, 2020) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has awarded \$3,865,000 in federal funds to [155 Maryland elementary schools](#) to help children build lifelong healthy eating habits. The funds made available by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provide fresh fruits and vegetables to students enrolled in participating schools statewide.

To facilitate participation for schools serving non-congregate meals while operating the Summer Food Service Program during the pandemic, the MSDE requested and was approved for two statewide waivers from the USDA. The first waiver allows FFVP foods to be provided to parents or guardians when they are picking up meals for their children. The second waiver allows districts to designate alternate pick-up sites if a participating school is not an active meal site. This waiver allows children enrolled in participating schools to maintain access to the Program even if their school is not a meal site.

“This federal, state and local partnership introduces children to fresh fruits and vegetables that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to sample,” said State Superintendent of Schools Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. “The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is especially critical during this time as it continues to provide healthy, fresh, and nutritious options for Maryland students.”

The FFVP includes schools with a high percentage of low-income students, who often have limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Students are provided a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, at no charge. The FFVP teaches students that fresh produce can be a healthy and a delicious snack.

For more information on Maryland’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, please contact Jill Hann at the MSDE’s Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs at 410-767-0218 or Jill.Hann@Maryland.gov.

The Maryland State Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are equal opportunity employers and providers.

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