

## **ADDENDUM**

**TO:** USDA Mountain Plains Regional Office

**FROM:** Tamra Jackson, State Director  
Wyoming Child Nutrition Programs

**DATE:** May 15, 2020

**SUBJECT:** A request to extend Addendum to State Program Area Eligibility Waiver Approval from June 30, 2020 to August 31, 2020

Wyoming Department of Education would like to extend the offer to all participating SFSP sponsoring organizations the option to serve and receive reimbursement for meals at open meal sites that do not meet the 50 percent or more free or reduced priced eligibility requirement from June 30, 2020 to August 31, 2020. This is based on the addendum of need in Wyoming that was submitted on March 27, 2020 to the original Area Eligibility Waiver submitted on March 18, 2020. The Wyoming waiver was approved on March 28, 2020.

- Initially we asked for the Program Area Eligibility to extend to October 30, 2020. Wyoming's waiver was approved through June 30, 2020. This wording was included in the approval letter.  
“While WDE requests this waiver through October 2020, FNS limited the duration of the waiver to assess its impact and the need for continued flexibility. FNS recognizes that there may be a continued need for this waiver, and will carefully assess the situation on an ongoing basis.”
- We feel this is the time to assess the situation and is the basis of this request.
- We currently have two hundred and fifty (250) sites that are serving food during the unexpected school closures in Wyoming. One hundred and fifty (150) of the sites are under 50% free and reduced and are not area eligible.
  - Sixteen (16) communities will have no area eligibility sites after June 30, 2020. That might sound like a small number but there are only one hundred (100) communities in Wyoming that are over three hundred (300) residents. The distance between communities would make it very difficult for families in need to access the meals from another district.

- All districts that are serving at sites that are not area eligible submitted a plan to WDE for each site of how they were targeting their free and reduced students when the initial Area Eligibility Waiver was approved. We approved each of the individual plans.
- Wyoming depends on Oil-Gas-Coal, Agriculture and Tourism. At this point two of those industries are pretty much non-existent and agriculture is greatly affected. This is affecting so many of our residents. Many that were previously not free and reduced will qualify in the fall but will not currently qualify for P-EBT.
- There will be great confusion in communities with one hundred and fifty (150) of the sites no longer serving food and hearing that other sites are still serving food to students in need in other communities. The districts will be put in a very difficult position of trying to explain why.
- WDE sent out a survey to the forty-five (45) districts (all districts are providing meals) and two (2) private schools that are serving on May 14, 2020 asking if there was an extension of the waiver how many still saw a need and would continue serving. We heard from forty-five (45) of the forty-seven (47) with this response. Thirty-five (35) would continue serving and ten (10) would not. Of the ten (10) that would not continue, seven (7) of them cited exhaustion of their staff and lack of additional resources to continue past June 30<sup>th</sup>. This shows that they see the need, from the kids and the parents. The firsthand pictures and accounts truly tell the need.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to extend the area eligibility waiver in Wyoming from June 30<sup>th</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> which is in line with the extension of the other national waivers.

If you have any questions, concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at (307)777-6263 or [tamra.jackson@wyo.gov](mailto:tamra.jackson@wyo.gov).