



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Full Plates Full Potential Launches Emergency Fund

Statewide Fund will help kids get meals during COVID - 19 School Closures

Portland, ME – Full Plates Full Potential, the Maine-based nonprofit working to end child hunger statewide, announced a Full Plates Emergency Fund today. The Emergency Fund will support schools and organizations statewide through grants during the COVID - 19 pandemic. The Emergency Fund begins with \$31,000 through the incredible support of our FEED KIDS Partners and donations from the public.

This urgent public health crisis for COVID -19 changed dramatically for schools after Governor Mills and the Maine CDC recommended on March 13th that all schools close as soon as practical.

“We have been fielding requests from schools and funders asking what Full Plates can do to help kids get meals while schools are closed,” said Justin Alfond, Full Plates Full Potential’s co-director. “The Emergency Fund will give critical grants to schools and organizations on the front line distributing breakfast and lunch meals. The fund gives everyone an opportunity to be generous to kids who every day rely on school as their primary source of nutrition.”

To learn more about the Full Plates Full Potential Emergency Fund or to apply for funding go to <https://www.fullplates.org/emergency-funding/>. Grants up to \$1,000 will be given to schools or organizations.

Grants will help pay for the increased costs of preparing more meals, safe packaging for breakfast and lunch meals, and transportation costs of distributing meals.

“School Nutrition Directors and their staff are coming up with incredible solutions to get meals to their kids,” said Anna Korsen, Program Director at Full Plates Full Potential. “We established the Emergency Fund to help all of our school and organizational partners, but especially prioritizing those that cannot be reimbursed for the meals they serve.”

Maine Child Hunger Statistics for 2019/2020 Academic Year:

- 184,000 total student population
- 43% of students qualify for free and reduced school meals
- 80,000 of students qualify for free and reduced school meals
- Schools with fewer than 50% of students eligible for free and reduced school meals are not eligible to operate the USDA's Summer Food Service Program. This will affect over 100,000 students living in communities where emergency meals will not be reimbursed by either the federal or state government.

About Full Plates Full Potential

Full Plates Full Potential is on a mission to end child hunger in Maine by partnering with nonprofit advocates, local businesses and restaurants, advocating for policy changes at the state level, granting funds and providing technical assistance to schools, hosting year-round events and fundraisers, and promoting the FEED KIDS cause marketing initiative. Learn more at fullplates.org.

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