

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock  
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney  
LT. GOVERNOR

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**CONTACTS:**

Marissa Perry, Communications Director, Governor's Office, (406) 444-4514

Erin Loranger, Press Secretary, Governor's Office, (406) 444-9725

Jon Ebelt, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, (406) 444-0936

**Governor, First Lady Bullock Announce \$15,000 No Kid Hungry Grant Awarded to Kalispell Public Schools for Meals During COVID-19 Emergency**

KALISPELL – Governor Steve Bullock, First Lady Lisa Bullock, and Montana No Kid Hungry today announced a \$15,000 grant to support Kalispell Public Schools Food Service's work to reach families in need of meals as part of the response to COVID-19.

**"Access to nutritious meals for families is critical throughout the year and especially during this difficult time,"** Governor Bullock said. **"We're fortunate that Montana No Kid Hungry is there to partner with our local communities. I thank all the schools and communities across the state that are stepping up to meet the needs of our children."**

**"When faced with difficult challenges, Montana communities rally around each other to support residents,"** First Lady Lisa Bullock said. **"The way Kalispell Public Schools has responded is a great example of how the entire state is working together to meet the needs of our friends and neighbors."**

The grant funds will be used to help keep Kalispell's meal service up and running while schools are closed due to COVID-19. Jana Graham, Food Service Director for Kalispell Public Schools, said the grant will be used to pay for food, packaging, and staff payroll. **"This grant will make a huge difference in the community,"** Graham said.

During the first week of school closures, the Kalispell Food Service team served approximately 900 meals, and now that number has risen to 2,000 per week. Meals are offered to families for pickup every day of the week with lunch for that day and breakfast for the next morning.

Graham said her team has taken this role very seriously. **"When school closures were announced, our team moved quickly to respond,"** she said. **"We know how important our role is to deliver nutritious food to the kids who normally rely on school meals as well as families who have a new need as a result of coronavirus-related challenges."**

Graham also complimented her staff on their efforts to prepare high-quality food. **“We’ve had sub sandwiches, chicken spaghetti, burritos – things that they can heat up at home so they’re not just having a ham and cheese sandwich every day,”** Graham said. **“Our bakers are making homemade muffins and cookies.”**

And, Graham said the feedback they’ve received from the community has been inspiring.

**“There was a mom talking about how grateful she was,”** Graham said. **“She had four boys, and she said whenever they had leftover veggies from our lunches they would set them aside to make a big pot of soup for dinner. They had some apples leftover, so they made a pie. I’ve received emails and people driving by every day saying how much they appreciate the help and how much it means for their family.”**

Montana No Kid Hungry is continuously reviewing coronavirus relief grant applications from schools and organizations statewide, and expects more funding to be awarded.

Montana No Kid Hungry is a public-private partnership between Governor Bullock’s Office, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, and a national non-profit called Share Our Strength.

***No Kid Hungry Emergency Relief Grants Available.** No Kid Hungry is offering real-time funding and assistance for schools and community organizations that are finding new, innovative ways to make sure kids have access to the meals they need as schools close due to the novel coronavirus. No Kid Hungry is providing emergency grants to support these local efforts, like home-delivered meals, grab-and-go meals programs, school and community pantries, backpack programs, and other steps to help reach children and families who lose access to meals.*

*If your organization needs funding to support these efforts and you’d like more information, please reach out to: **Jenny Martini, Montana No Kid Hungry** // [jenny.martini@mt.gov](mailto:jenny.martini@mt.gov)*