

Welcome!

We'll Get Started Soon.



A close-up photograph of two young girls smiling. The girl on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a dark blue shirt with denim overalls. The girl on the right has dark skin and curly hair, wearing a pink and white striped shirt. They are outdoors with a blurred background of greenery and sunlight.

Reaching the Last Mile

Strategies for Serving Ultra-Rural Populations

March 4, 2026



Things to Know Before We Begin

- The slide deck will be shared via email after the webinar along with the recording.
- To engage with other attendees, please use the chat box.
- If you have questions for the speakers, please enter those into the Q&A box.
- Closed captioning is available.



AGENDA

- Ultra-Rural Communities: Data Snapshot
- Panel Presentation
- Q&A
- Closing

What do we mean by “Ultra-Rural?”

Extreme Geographic Isolation: Significant distance from major metropolitan or urban centers.

Very Low Population Density

Limited Access: Fewer services, such as healthcare, broadband internet, transportation

2025 Sponsor Survey on Rural Non-Congregate Summer Meal Programs

Preliminary Findings



Survey Methodology

In summer 2025, sponsors implemented rural non-congregate (RNC) summer meal programs to expand access to nutritious meals for children who may not have been able to attend congregate sites.

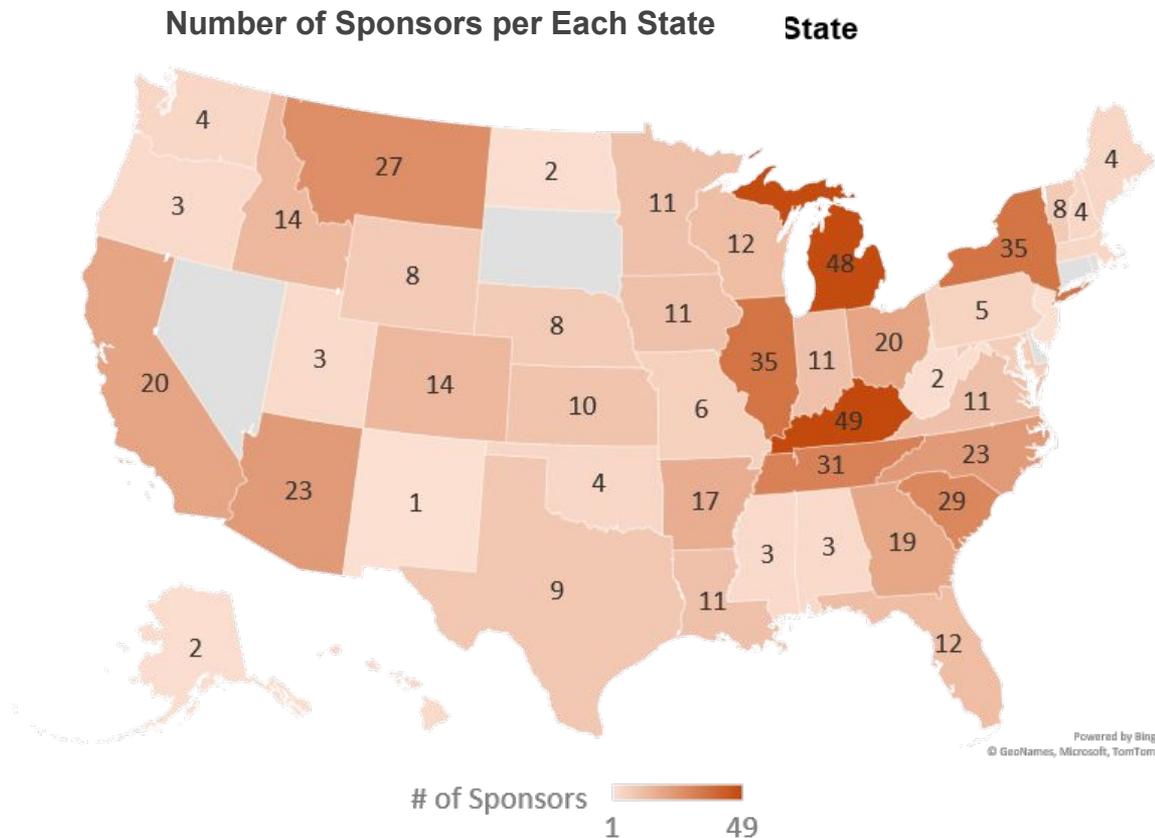
This survey was conducted to capture how sponsors operated the program, identify successes and challenges, and inform future technical assistance and support.

Survey Overview

Respondents: 589
sponsors across 45 states
and DC

Survey period: August 25
to September 26, 2025

Completion rate: 51.5%

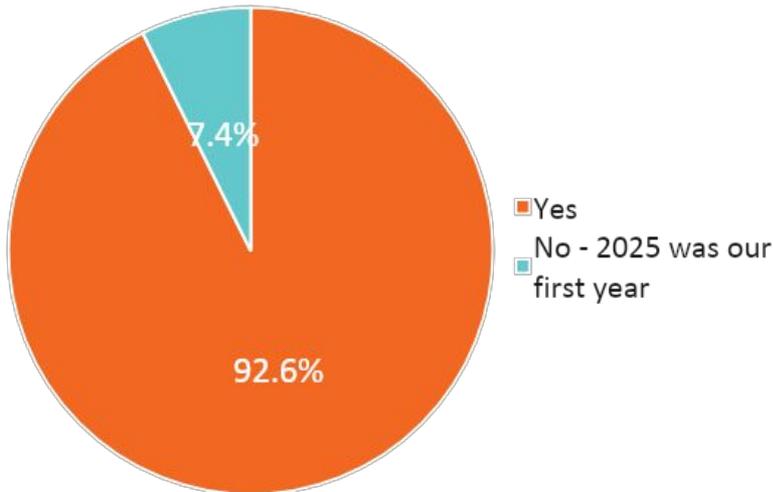


Numbers not shown in map: CT (n=0), DE (n=0), HI (n=3), MA (n=4), MD (n=7), NJ (n=1), RI (n=0); Puerto Rico (n=0)

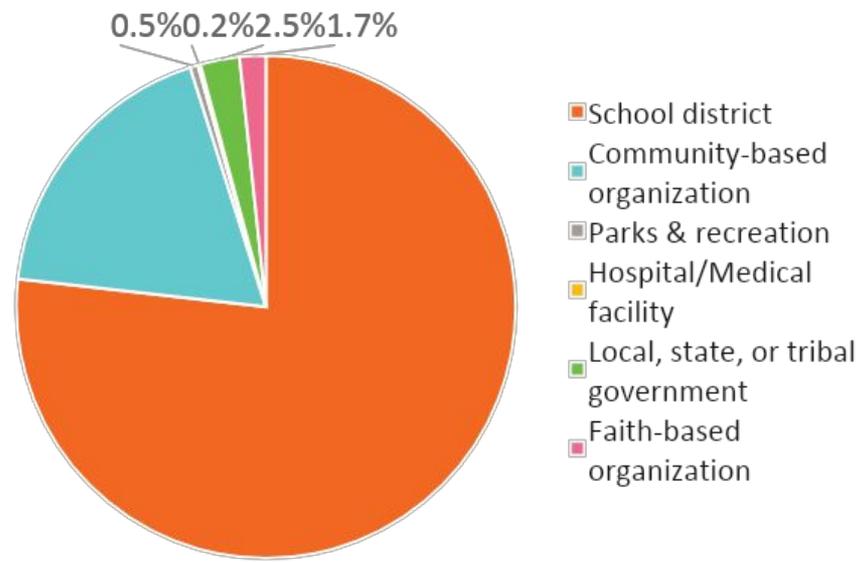
Preliminary Findings: Summer Meals Sponsor Characteristics

Most respondents are returning sponsors (92%) and school districts (76%).

Had your organization ever operated a summer meals program before 2025? (n=569)

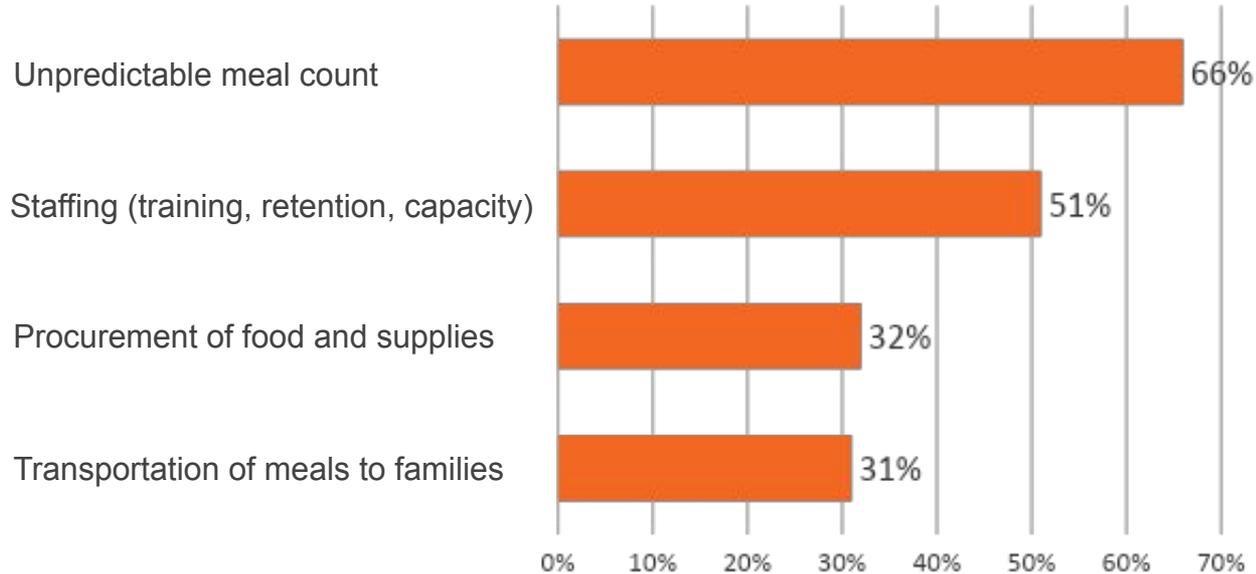


Organization Types Represented (n=589)



Preliminary Findings: Sponsors' Top-Ranked Challenges for Program Operation (n=543)

Overall, sponsors found challenges surmountable and found the program straightforward to operate. Still, sponsors reported the following as top challenges to program operation:



Disclaimer

Our speakers represent their own experience with non-congregate summer meal programs in their states and localities. Certain program models and implementation methods may be restricted in some states. Check with your local state agency before implementing any new meal service models or implementation methods.

Meet Our Speakers



Julie Bjorkstrand

Director, Nutrition
Services
Del Norte Unified
School District
Northern California



Janette Broda

School Nutrition
Director
Transylvania
County Schools
Western
North Carolina



Scott Germain

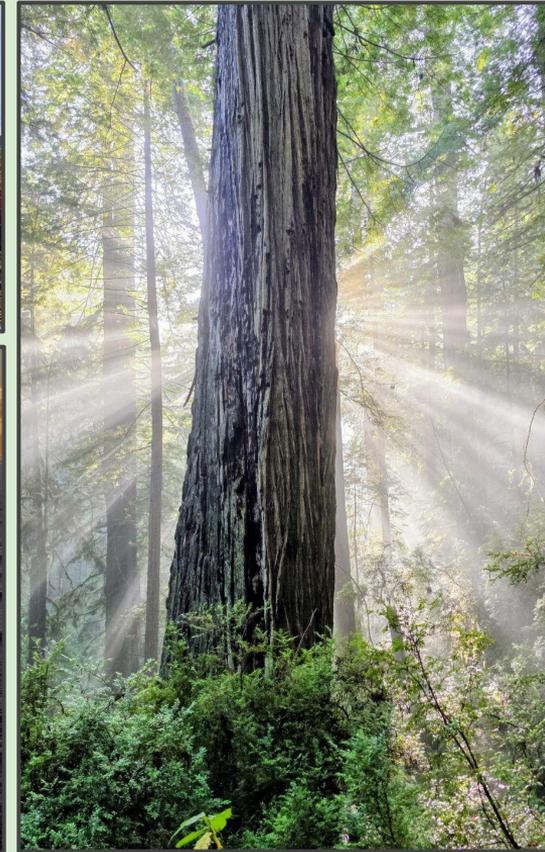
Food & Nutrition
Services Supervisor
Garrett County
Schools
Western Maryland



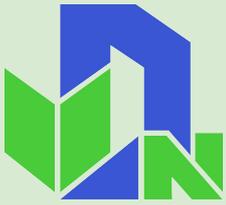
Julie Bjorkstrand

Julie Bjorkstrand is the Director of Nutrition Services for Del Norte Unified School District. With resilience and optimism, she oversees the Child Nutrition Program that serves around 3,600 district-enrolled students.

Julie brings over 12 years of experience to her role, and she is especially dedicated to this community, as she grew up attending the very schools she now serves. She manages all operations, budgeting, and staff leadership for an amazing team of over 30 across a warehouse, central kitchen, and 12 schools in this rural community.



Photos by Julie Bjorkstrand

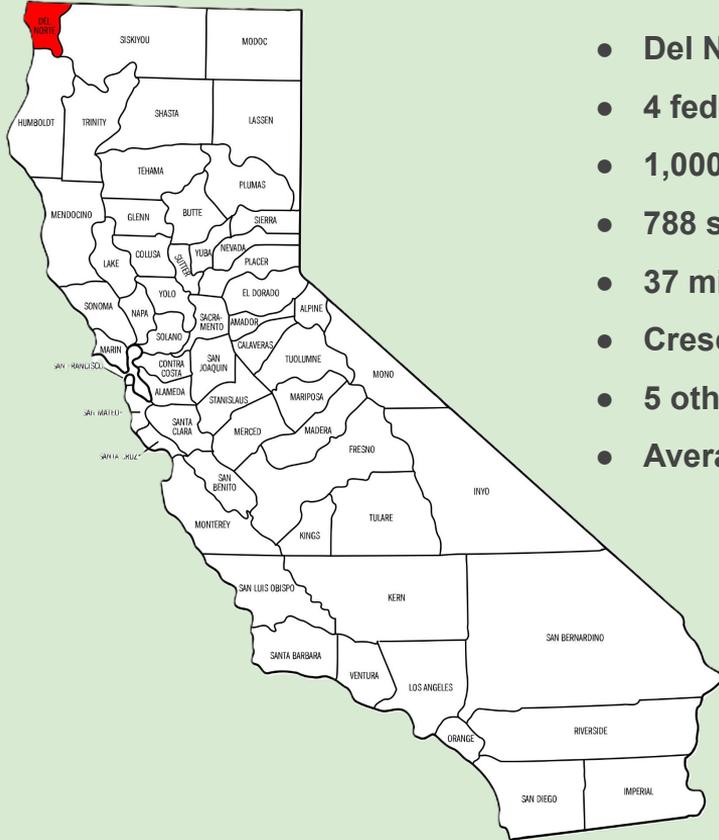


Del Norte County, CA

Redwood Gate to the Golden State



DEL NORTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Nutrition
SERVICES

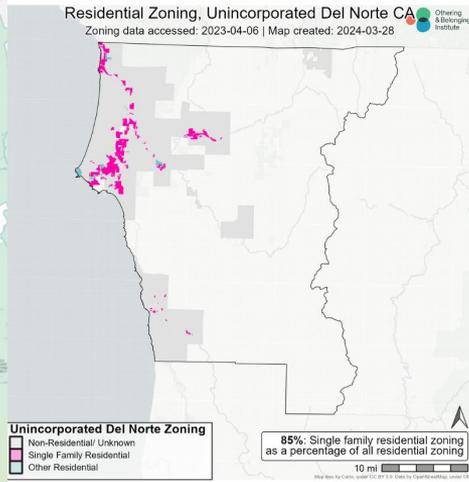
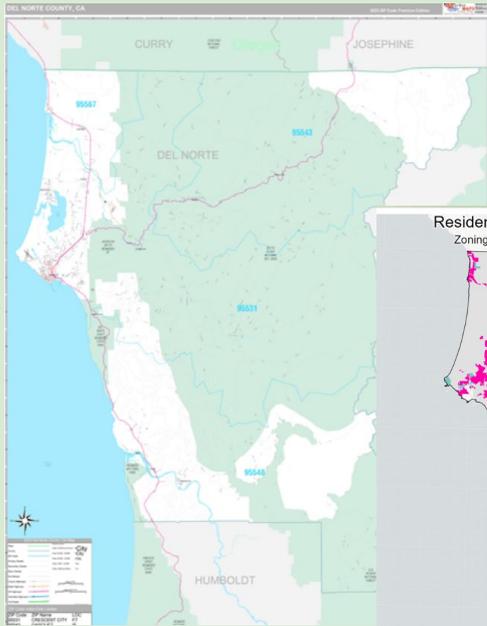


- **Del Norte County Population: 27,743**
- **4 federally recognized nations**
- **1,000 sq. miles**
- **788 sq. miles owned by state or federal agencies**
- **37 miles of coastline**
- **Crescent City, only incorporated city**
- **5 other towns/ communities**
- **Average 65 inches of rain per year**



Coastal & Remote

Landslides, trees and boulders....oh my!!



- Highway 101 - north/ south access
- Highway 199 - east/ west access
- Frequent road closures impact travel
- Population center, Crescent City but families are spread across rural areas



Summer Nutrition Service Program

Food That's In When School Is Out

2014

Hey Kids and Teens...
Join us for Nutritious Summer Meals

FREE TO ALL ages 0-18

Children do not need to be attending Summer School to receive meals (parents must be able to cheer & be aware)

WHERE: Del Norte High School Cafeteria
1801 E Dorado St.
Breakfast 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Lunch 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.
June 16, 2014 – July 11, 2014 Monday – Friday

Del Norte Community Health Center
605 E. Washington Blvd.
Breakfast 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Lunch 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.
June 16, 2014 – July 11, 2014 Monday – Friday

Smith River School Cafeteria
654 W. First
Breakfast 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Lunch 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.
June 16, 2014 – July 11, 2014 Monday – Friday

First St's Family Resource Center
404 Pacific Ave.
Breakfast 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Lunch 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
June 16, 2014 – July 11, 2014 Monday – Friday

*No service July 4, 2014, in observance of Independence Day.

ALL FOOD MUST BE CONSUMED ON SITE.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture
and the U.S. Department of Health
& Human Services
1000, Clatsop, Wells & 2000
48, GPO 732, 364.

seamless SUMMER FOOD program 2019

June 17 to Aug 15, 2019

FREE Nutritious MEALS Breakfast & Lunch
kids & teens ages 0-18 **MON - FRI**

Open Door Community Health Center
550 E. Washington Blvd, Crescent City
Breakfast 9:30 am - 10:30 am
Lunch 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

Downtown Farmers Market
Corner of Front St. and S. Crescent City
Breakfast 9:00am - 10:00am
Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Coastal Connections
275 S. Crescent City
Breakfast 9:00 am - 10:00 am
Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Summer Park Apartments
1500 Summer Park Ct., Crescent City
Breakfast 9:30 am - 10:30 am
Lunch 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Hidden Creek Apartments
1000 Scenic Creek Dr., Crescent City
Breakfast 9:30 am - 10:30 am
Lunch 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Totem Villa Apartments
1045 West 1st North, Crescent City
Breakfast 9:00 am - 10:00 am
Lunch 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Yuruk Tribal Office
190 Klamath Blvd, Klamath
Breakfast 9:00 am - 10:00 am
Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

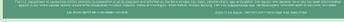
Klamath Glen
Crescent City
Breakfast 7:00
Lunch 1:00

DN Recreation Department
1005 S. S., Crescent City
Lunch Only, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

DN Child Care Council
118 S. S., Crescent City
Breakfast 9:00 am - 10:00 am
Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

No meals will be served July 4th

For more information call or email Julie Bjorkstrand
at ns.dept@dnusd.org or call (707) 464-0246



SEAMLESS SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM

JUNE 17th THRU AUGUST 9th, 2024

Meals will be handed out Monday thru Friday each week at the below listed locations. Children and youth 18 and under will be provided two meals on each service day. Children MUST be present to receive meals.

Bess Maxwell School
1124 El Dorado Street,
Crescent City

Boys and Girls Club of Klamath
100 Klamath Blvd., Klamath
Crescent City

Del Norte Child Care Council
(Mon-Fri, except Wednesdays)
212 K Street, Crescent City

Downtown Farmers Market
(Wednesday Only)
100 Price Mall, Crescent City

Faith Christian Center
117 Brookings Ave, Smith River

Family Resource Center of the Redwoods
494 Pacific Avenue, Crescent City

Hidden Creek Apartments
1000 Scenic Creek Drive,
Crescent City

Howonquet Hall
(At Playground Area)
101 Indian Court,
Smith River, CA 95567

House of Deliverance
2455 Oliver Street,
Crescent City

Mountain School
55 Azalea Ln, Gasquet

Open Door Health Center
550 E. Washington Blvd,
Crescent City

Redwood School
6700 Lakeview Drive,
Crescent City

Willow Line Taproom
330 Terwer Riffe Rd, Klamath

Summer Park Apartments
1500 Summer Park Court,
Crescent City

Youth Opportunity Center
1115 Williams Drive,
Crescent City

Breakfast & Lunch
Monday thru Friday
FREE Nutritious Meals
Kids and Teens Ages 0-18
MEAL PICK-UP
10am - 11am
Sites Listed

←

NO MEAL SERVICE
Wed, June 19th
or
Thurs, July 4th

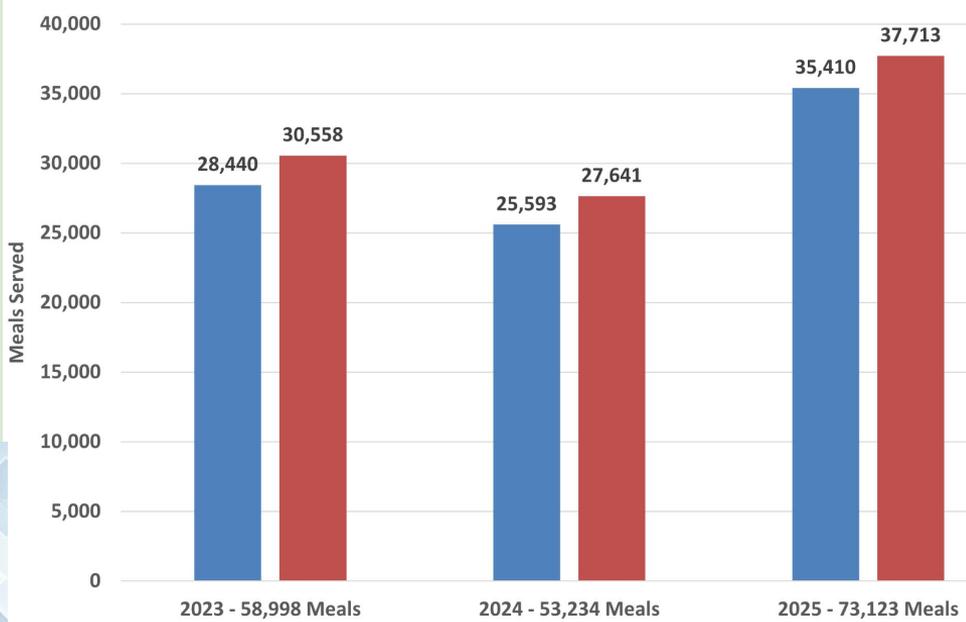
For more information call or email Julie Clark at jclark@DNUSD.org or call (707) 464-0246

ns.dept@dnusd.org



ns.dept@dnusd.org

Summer Meals Participation: 3-Year Trend



■ Breakfast ■ Lunch

Seamless Summer Over The Years

FREE Nutritious Meals Breakfast & Lunch Kids and Teens Ages 0-18 Monday & Wednesdays 11am-12pm

For more information email or call Julie Bjorkstrand at ns.dept@dnusd.org or call (707) 464-0246.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Change can be hard but sometimes you just have to do it and hope for the best...



JUNE 16, 2025
SUMMER Kick-Off CELEBRATIONS
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
FOOD FOR KIDS (11AM - 12PM)
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS
ACTIVITIES FOR ALL!
BEACHFRONT PARK - KIDS TOWN PARKING LOT
FRONT STREET, CRESCENT CITY, CA

MUSIC
Bubbles

NO KID HUNGRY
DEL NORTE
NUTRITION SERVICES



Seamless Summer Food Program
June 16, 2025 - August 15, 2025
Meals will be handed out **Mondays and Wednesdays ONLY.**
Children and youth 18 and under will be provided breakfast and lunch meals on each service day. **Meals:** Families will receive two breakfast meals and two lunch meals per child-for Monday and Tuesday; Wednesday; Families will receive four breakfast meals and four lunch meals per child-for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
Children **MUST** be present to receive meals.

Beachfront Park (Kids Town Parking Lot) - Play Street, Crescent City
Bess Maxwell School - 1124 El Dorado Street, Crescent City
Boys and Girls Club of Klamath - 168 Klamath Blvd, Klamath
Downtown Farmers Market - 240 N. Broadway, Crescent City (Wednesday Only)
Faith Christian Center - 117 Brookings Ave, Smith River
Family Resource Center of the Redwoods - 494 Pacific Avenue, Crescent City
Hidden Creek Apartments - 1000 Sonoma Creek Drive, Crescent City
House of Deliverance - 2455 Oliver Street, Crescent City
Howonquet Hall (At Playground Area) - 101 Indian Court, Smith River
Mountain School - 55 Azalea Ln, Gasquet
Open Door Health Center - 650 E. Washington Blvd, Crescent City
Summer Park Apartments - 1500 Summer Park Court, Crescent City
Willow Line Taproom - 330 Tenner Riffle Rd, Klamath
Youth Opportunity Center - 1115 Williams Dr, Crescent City

FREE Breakfast & Lunch
Meals
for more information email or call Julie Bjorkstrand | 11am-12pm
at ns.dept@ndusd.org or call (707) 464-0246.

DEL NORTE
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Obstacles provide opportunities, challenges provide chances.

Obstacles:

- Limited staffing
- Low participation
- Inconsistent participation

Opportunities:

- Community partners help distribution
- Increase interest use food hubs to feature CA grown, fresh produce
- Reduce number of distribution days
- Increase number of meals distributed by adding Saturday meals





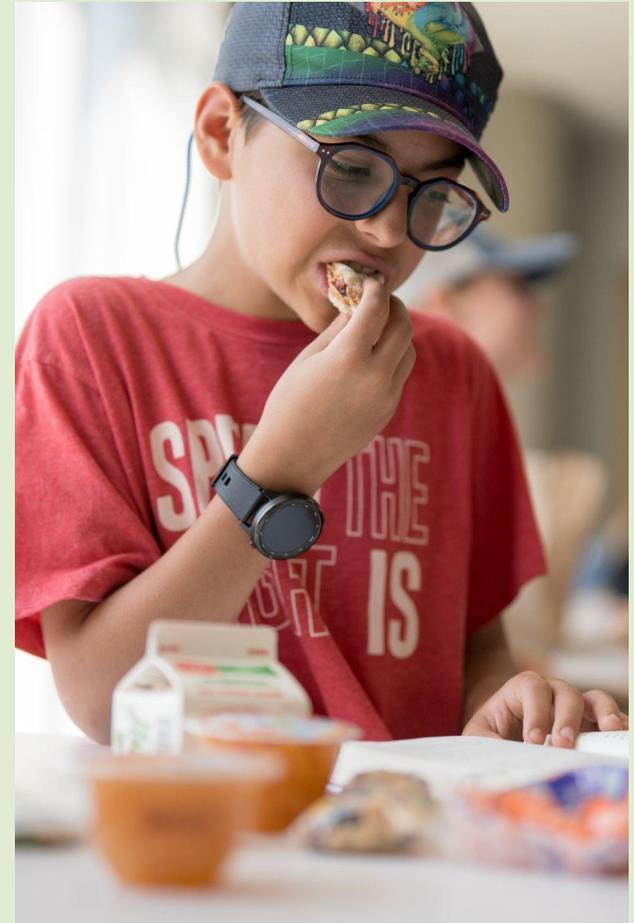
Scott Germain

**Supervisor, Food & Nutrition Services,
Garrett County Public Schools**

Scott has been the Supervisor of the Garrett County Public Schools Food & Nutrition Services Department for 27 years. He has 43 total years of food service experience.

He has expanded the Food & Nutrition Services Program to include Supper and Summer Food Service in order to provide meals for children who otherwise might not have access to them.

Scott earned an AA from Garrett Community College in McHenry, MD and a BA in Travel Industry Management from Concord College in Athens, WV. Scott is a member of the School Nutrition Association, a certified ServSafe Instructor with the National Restaurant Association, and past president and current member of the Maryland Association of School Business Officials.



Garrett County Public Schools

- Enrollment – 3,358
- 12 Kitchens
- 13 Buildings
- 10 Full Time Managers
- 1 Full Time staff
- 34 Part Time Staff
- 3 Full Time Office Staff
- 100% CEP (this year)
- ADP Lunch 56%
- ADP Breakfast 53%



Challenges in Rural Summer Food Service

1. Staffing
2. Deliveries
3. Getting to everyone
4. Finding locations
5. Marketing



Staffing

- Not everyone wants to work year-round
- Those that do often have vacations or County Fair to attend

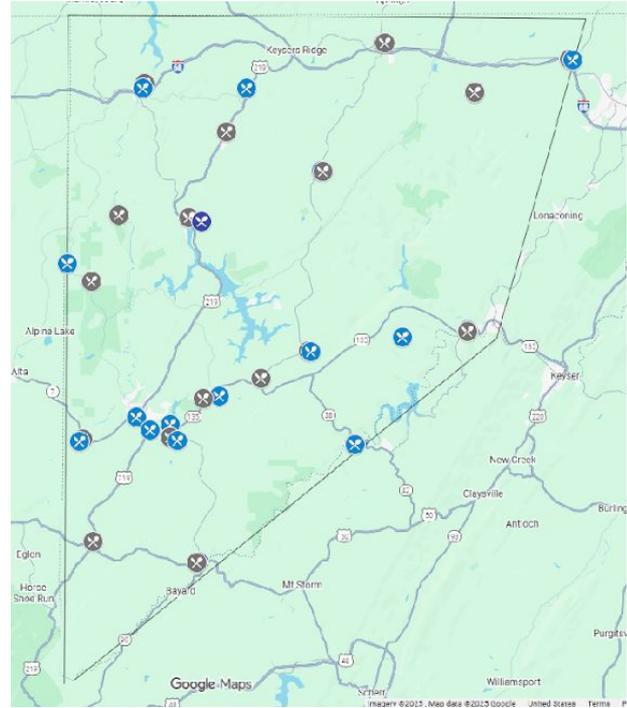
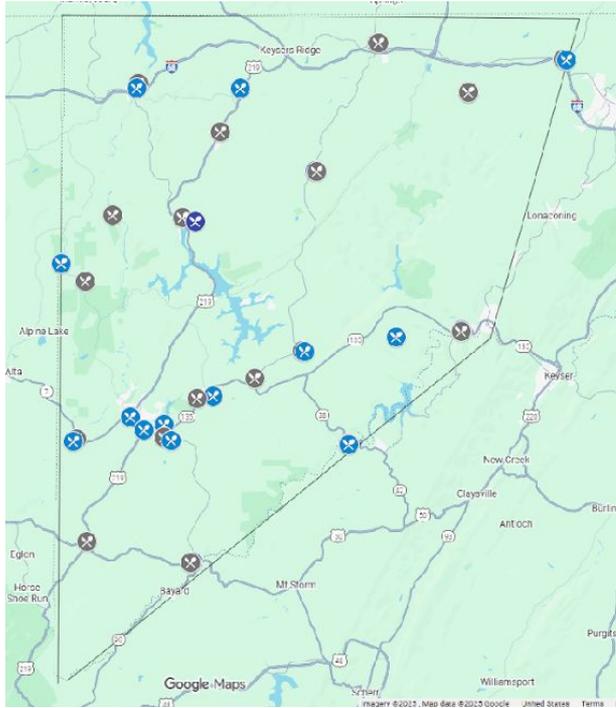
Deliveries

- Vendors are coming from 2 to 4 hours away
- Sometimes need to make deliveries during odd hours
- If you miss the delivery, must wait until next week for another

Getting to Everyone

- Over an hour drive from one end to the other end of the county
- Families might live 20 minutes from distribution sites

Locations



Years	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Total Summer Meals Served	103,746	256,574	230,562	143,770	175,170	172,140	12,746

Marketing



Free Summer Meals Available Here For Children and Teens Call 888-262-2792 for more locations or go to GarrettCountySchools.org/Summer-Food-Service

Free Books for Everyone



SCHOOLS OUT



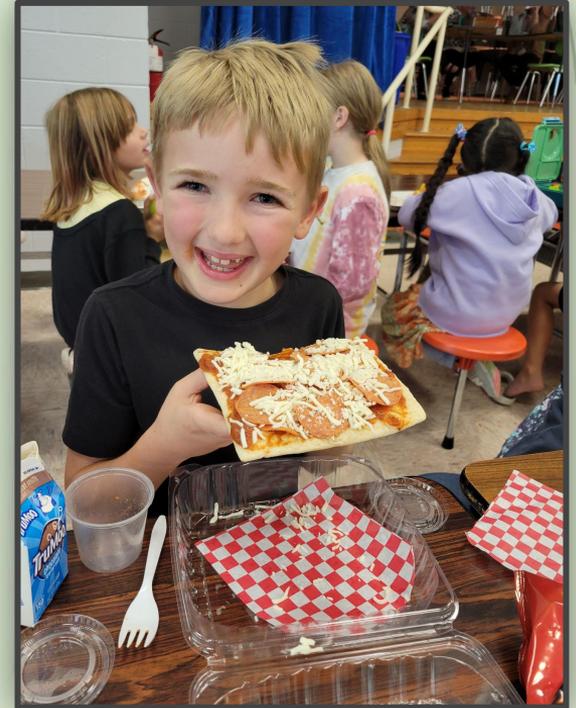


Janette Broda

Janette Broda is a Registered Dietitian and School Nutrition Director for Transylvania County Schools, located in a small, rural community in the mountains of Western North Carolina. With 13 years of experience in School Nutrition—spanning three counties as well as service at the state level, Janette Broda is committed to ensuring all students have access to high-quality, nutrient-dense meals.

Janette values the opportunity to help shape the next generation by supporting their health, well-being, and readiness to learn. She is married with two children, ages 8 and 10. This is her son Oliver, pictured right, trying out the new pizza boxes in the cafeteria.

He is the department's strongest food critic!



Serving Transylvania County

Transylvania County - “Land of Waterfalls”

Located in Western North Carolina

Rural, mountain community b/t Asheville,
NC and Greenville, SC

Population - 34,000

250 waterfalls throughout county

Home to Pisgah National Forest, Gorges

State Park & Dupont State Forest

Transylvania County Schools

District enrollment: 3,361

9 school sites

100% CEP

Offering SBP, NSLP, FFVP, CACFP
At-Risk, SFSP and Farm to School
Programs

Catering Services to community and local
daycares

Backpack buddy program providing

Summer 2025 Site Information

Congregate Meal Sites

Served 12 closed enrolled day camps

Monday-Friday

Variety of breakfast and lunch served daily

Non-congregate Meal Sites

NCM Pick-up Sites - we offered 2 locations daily

NCM Home Delivery - we offered this service county wide

NCMH Site - weekend meals were offered during summer school weeks.

16 Total Sites

Total Meals Served in Summer 2025

44,745



35% increase
in summer meals served from
summer 2024

How did we increase by 35%?

1. Expanded our NCM Home Delivery route to offer meals county wide
2. Provided uninterrupted meal service compared to previous years at all NCM sites



NCM Home Delivery Successes

- Served our community better by reaching more children in need and closing the nutritional gap
- Hot lunch and breakfast were provided Monday-Thursday plus weekend meals were offered
- Offering meals every week of summer break provided consistent & reliable employment for staff
- Staff remained open-minded to allow adjustments to routes at a moments notice
- We were awarded a grant through Share Our Strength to purchase materials, supplies and a vehicle
- Serving as a NCM Home Delivery Sun Meals To-Go model



Sun Meals To-Go North Carolina



**Delivery/pick up summer meals
for youth in some rural areas**

Learn more and find meals at:

<https://summermeals4nckids.org/sun-meals-to-go/> ↗



NCM Home Delivery Daily Challenges

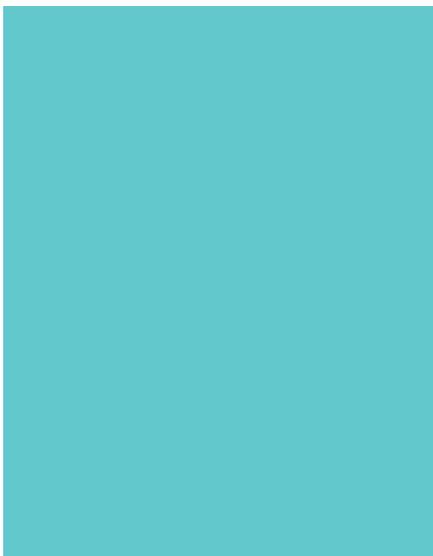
- Planning meal delivery routes
- Managing meals per labor hour
- Shelf-stable food costs are higher
- Food Waste
- Providing consistent delivery times to secure participation
- Ensuring staff safety





Speaker Q & A





Resources & More!

Visit our Center for Best Practices:

www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org

Register for upcoming webinars:

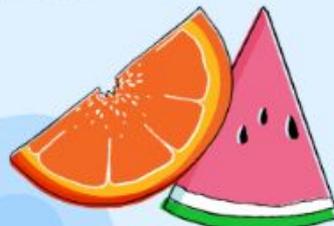
www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/webinars

Summer Resources:

[No Kid Hungry Summer Meals Eligibility Map](#)

[Successful Non-Congregate Meal Service Models for Rural Areas: Implementation Guide-](#)

Summertime Snack



Join No Kid Hungry's monthly newsletter to receive access to:

- *Summer Meals Webinars*
- *Summer Resources*
- *Summer Templates*
- *Summer Tools and more!*

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER!

bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/subscribe





Your Feedback is Appreciated!

At the conclusion of this webinar, a 5-question survey will open in your browser window.

Please take a moment to complete it.



THANK YOU

Robin Hernandez

Sr. Manager, Center for Best
Practices

rhernandez@strength.org