

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friday, April 24, 2020

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 Over \$135,000 in No Kid Hungry Grants to Seven Montana Communities for Continued Food Assistance During COVID-19

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock, First Lady Lisa Bullock and Montana No Kid Hungry today announced grants to seven Montana communities totaling more than \$135,000 to help address food access gaps around the state related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“Many Montanans, private organizations and public schools are stepping up to fill gaps when it comes to nutrition needs across the state,” Governor Steve Bullock said. **“We truly are all in this together, and these funds from Montana No Kid Hungry will support the efforts underway in our communities to connect families to nutritious meals.”**

“No Montanan should have to worry about being able to feed their children,” First Lady Lisa Bullock said. **“I’m grateful to the many organizations and schools across our state that recognize the increased needs for families and are going the extra mile to ensure Montana families have food to put on the table.”**

School nutrition teams, food banks, backpack programs and diverse community organizations have all pitched in to meet the needs of families coping with the impacts of COVID-19. Montana No Kid Hungry has been supporting these local efforts to get nutritious food to Montanans who need it by awarding grants throughout the past few weeks.

Today Governor Bullock and First Lady Bullock, in partnership with Montana No Kid Hungry, announced grant funds to the following organizations:

- Butte School District - \$33,500
- Farm to School of Park County - \$50,000
- Wibaux K-12 Schools - \$5,000
- Anaconda School District - \$14,750
- Montana Food Bank Network - \$15,000
- Box Elder Public Schools - \$7,700
- Huntley Project Schools - \$9,400

Additionally, Kalispell Public Schools was awarded a Montana No Kid Hungry grant of \$15,000 last week.

The Montana No Kid Hungry emergency relief grants are made possible by generous donations from Montana funders, including Walmart, Llewellyn Foundation, Montana Association of REALTORS®, Signal Peak Energy, Angora Ridge Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana, Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation and Wells Fargo Bank.

Each organization is using the grant funds differently to respond to local need.

Many school districts are using grant funds to operate and sustain Grab N' Go meal services for families who previously relied on school meals, as well as families finding themselves in need of new support since suffering impacts of COVID-19.

In order to meet the needs in their communities, school staff are going above and beyond their normal job duties. Box Elder Public Schools, for example, plans to use grant funds to deliver meals to 150 children who are not part of the district.

“After days of serving breakfast and lunch in six locations daily, we have observed that our children and families need more food than we are providing,” said Principal Tammy Hurley with Anaconda School District. **“They need a snack and some need an extra bag for dinner. We live in a high poverty county and we want to do everything possible to provide for our children.”**

Farm to School of Park County, the recipient of the largest grant in this round, is at the forefront of innovation and sustainability and is working closely with school districts in the area.

Rachael Jones, Executive Director for Farm to School of Park County, explained that in addition to funding food, supplies and staff wages, the organization plans to **“purchase a Farm to School vehicle that will be deployed immediately for emergency food and supply deliveries. On a going-forward basis, the vehicle will be used for future county-wide cooperative food procurement practices, educational services, and school meal support services in Livingston.”**

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, 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 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*

###