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Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs

April 2016

PARTNERS

First Lady of Virginia Dorothy McAuliffe
 Feeding America Southwest Virginia
 FeedMore
 Share Our Strength
 Southeast United Dairy Industry Association
 Virginia Department of Education
 Virginia Department of Health
 Virginia Department of Social Services
 Virginia foundation for Healthy Youth
 Virginia Tech – Cooperative Extension

Project Timeline

February 2016 - Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. began contacting participating families by phone to conduct surveys. Families who participate will receive \$30 for their time. These calls will continue through the end of May. Please consider participating in these calls, as your responses are vital in demonstrating the positive effects of the project.

June, July & August, 2016—families of children in participating schools who are eligible for free and reduced meals will receive electronic benefits of \$60 per month, per child in these schools, to be spent on food.

June 2016—beginning in June, and extending throughout the project, all families with children in participating schools will be offered Nutrition Education classes through the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

August 2016—throughout the entire 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years, all students in participating schools will be offered three meals per day, at no charge, regardless of their eligibility for free & reduced meals. All students will be offered backpacks for weekends and short school breaks as well. *Backpacks for 2017-18 will be provided based on available funding.*

What is the Virginia 365 Project?

The Virginia 365 Project to End Childhood Hunger is a demonstration project that seeks to end childhood hunger by providing food to children where they learn, live and play 365 days a year. The Commonwealth of Virginia was selected to participate in this demonstration project by the United States Department of Agriculture. Within the Commonwealth, approximately 7,500 children will be positively impacted by this demonstration project.

Nine school divisions in Virginia were randomly selected to participate. Richmond City Schools will represent urban areas, while schools in the southwest region of Virginia will represent rural areas. Students in participating schools will receive supplemental nutritional benefits from new or existing USDA programs in innovative ways to demonstrate their effect on ending hunger. Here are some examples:

- **All students** in these schools will receive 3 meals per day, at no cost to the student, for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years.
- Families of **students who qualify for free or reduced price meals** in these schools will receive \$60 per month, per child, in electronic benefits in June, July and August 2016, to be spent on food.
- **All students and their families** in these schools will be eligible for nutrition education classes offered by the Virginia Cooperative Extension.
- **All students** in these schools will receive a backpack of food for weekends and short school breaks.

The project, which was initiated by Dorothy McAuliffe, First Lady of Virginia, aims to decrease food insecurity, school absenteeism, and behavioral problems while increasing academic performance. The project is funded by the USDA.



Today, there are 300,000 children in Virginia who are food insecure. In a state as rich in resources as ours, this

is simply unacceptable. For the first time, the Virginia 365 Project to End Childhood Hunger offers us the opportunity to ensure access to proper nutrition for our children every day throughout the year. Once the success of this model is proven, it could be expanded throughout the Commonwealth and across the United States. I am honored to be a part of such a promising, innovative initiative, and I am so grateful to all the partner organizations, schools, and families involved in this project. The 365 Project would not be possible without your participation and support. Together, we can not only end childhood hunger in Virginia, but we can secure healthier lives and better educational opportunities for our youngest generation. With your help, Virginia will lead the way to a hunger-free future.



In 2015, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched an [initiative](#) to develop new solutions to end childhood hunger. As a part of this initiative, the USDA was able to provide \$27 million in grants to states and tribal nations to test innovative strategies for ensuring all American children have enough to eat.

Funds were awarded through a competitive application process; state governments from across the country, including Virginia, submitted project proposals. After all of the proposals were evaluated, the Chickasaw Nation, Kentucky, the Navajo Nation, Nevada and Virginia were chosen to receive grants.

The Virginia 365 Project will test the impact of providing:

1. Three school meals a day to all children in select schools during the school year
2. Food for weekends and school breaks
3. More resources for low-income households to purchase food during the summer months when school meals may not be available.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

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http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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For more information about the
**Virginia 365 Project to
End Childhood Hunger**, visit
www.doe.virginia.gov

