

## Meal Eating Options and Considerations When Returning to School

SY 20-21 each school needs to have a plan to feed students while minimizing exposure to disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people stay at least 6 feet apart to practice **social distancing**. The Michigan Department of Education has gathered the following guidance with a team of food service directors from around the state. [Local health departments](#) should be contacted to ensure compliance with local rules and regulations and for additional guidance.

***Social distancing** means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social distancing stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.*

When considering feeding students in School Year 2020-2021 you should also **consider the risk level of your community** at [MI Safe Start Map](#).

[General Guidelines from CDC](#) to consider when planning for the fall:

- CDC does not recommend using a communal dining hall or cafeteria.
- CDC recommends meals in the classroom.
- CDC recommends individual plated meals.

## Things to Consider

- Minimize the number of students eating together.
- Work with unions and HR on staffing lunch supervision.
- Extra trash because of individually wrapped items.
- Secondary Schools: have open study time to extend or add meal periods to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria.
- Keep students with food allergies safe.
- Signage about social distancing and hand hygiene.

### Equipment needs:

- Need to buy more tables and chairs?
- Possible storage problems with extra tables.
- More trash cans.

### Student Hygiene:

- Students should be able to wash or sanitize hands before and after eating.
- Cleaning and sanitizing tables between groups.

## Where Could Students Eat Meals?

- In the cafeteria
- In the classroom
- In gym or unused classrooms
- In the hallways
- Outdoor areas

## **Cafeteria Set up Options**

- Seating 6 feet apart (50% capacity)
- Mark off seats that need to be empty
- Stand-up Bistro tables
- Ledges for extra seating along walls
- Doing away with bench seating

### **Links Used in Document:**

<https://www.malph.org/resources/directory>

<https://www.mistartmap.info/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>