MORE
THAN A MEAL

OUTREACH TOOLKIT

Resources for California schools to boost Student Benefits Form completions and increase funding while implementing the Free School Meals For All Act.

CREATED FOR

School staff, administration, and nutrition services departments

CREATED BY

SAN DIEGO
HUNGER
COALITION

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WHAT IS MORE THAN A MEAL?

"More than a Meal" is an outreach campaign aimed at ensuring that parents/caregivers complete and submit Free and Reduced-Priced Meal Applications (FRPM) or Alternative Household Income Forms to help increase funding for additional resources for your students and school(s).

Beginning in school year 2022-2023, California schools will be the first in the nation to embark on implementing the Free School Meals For All program. While the program is widely celebrated for providing free breakfast and lunch to all school-aged children in California without requiring meal forms for individual eligibility, California schools are dependent upon application data for key LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula) funding and student benefits.

If you are in your base-year of P2 or are a standard counting/claiming school, you will be collecting FRPM forms. If you are operating CEP, or P2 outside of your base-year, you will be collecting Alternative Household Income forms. Both forms help determine FRPM-eligibility, afterschool supper eligibility, and what supplemental and concentration grant funding the schools receive. More forms submitted means more funding for schools, and more money allocated for nutrition services departments.

The biggest question at hand: with Free School Meals For All underway, how are we going to help school administrators explain to parents the importance and value of continuing to fill out and submit these forms? That's where More Than a Meal steps in.

This More Than a Meal toolkit was inspired by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) campaign. Recognizing our neighbors to the north had a robust marketing and communications plan already established for increasing application submissions, the San Diego Hunger Coalition asked Manish Singh and Jason Horowitz of LAUSD to share their best tips, tricks, and practices at the Hunger Coalition's Hunger Free Kids Task Force meeting in 2021.

After two years of steadily declining meal application collection in San Diego County, it became readily apparent that we needed to create an editable and customizable toolkit for school districts across San Diego County to use. San Diego Hunger Coalition's adaption of More Than a Meal was born in partnership with the gracious resource sharing of LAUSD as well as the Hunger Free Kids Task Force members.

This toolkit was stewarded by Sanya Campbell, a California State University San Marcos graduate student, as part of her AmeriCorps VISTA summer internship at the San Diego Hunger Coalition.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit can be used to support both Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications as well as Alternative Household Income Forms. For purposes of brevity, we will use the term **"Student Benefits Form"** throughout this toolkit.

What will you need to use this toolkit?
- Your school logo in JPG or PNG format
- Name of your application (FRPM, Alt. Income Form, Student Benefits Form, School Funding Form, etc.)
- Live link to application
- Deadline of application
- Point of contact for parents/caregivers
- *Optional: A free Canva account

All contents of this toolkit can be found in this Google Drive.

How do I use the Canva templates?
1. Sign up for a free Canva account
2. To customize the flyers, click the "Canva Template Link" on Page 10. To customize the social media graphics, click the "Canva Template Link" on Page 11.
3. Those links will bring you to this screen below. Click the "Use template" button, circled in red:
   a.
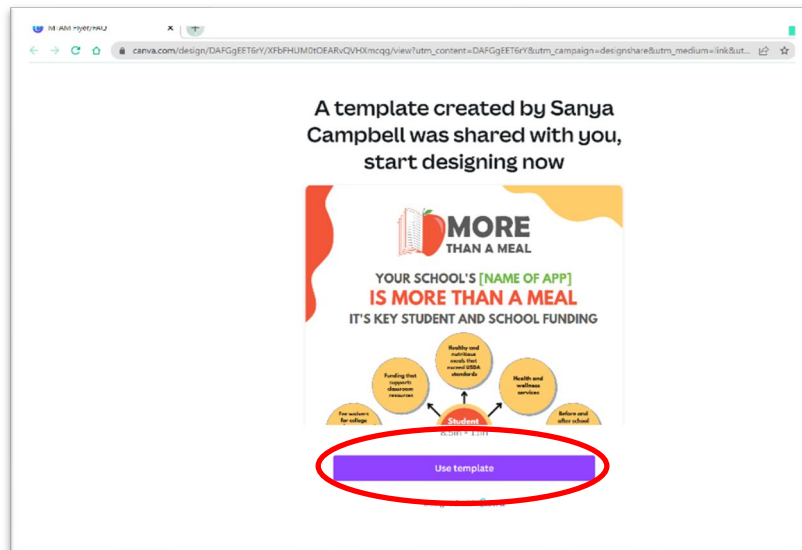
4. Items that vary across school districts are in green font for your convenience. To adapt this letter with your school's information, please add your logo and edit everything in green. Delete any sections that are not applicable to your district (see #5 on Page 7). See how to add your school logo on the next page.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT (CONT.)

4a. Add your logo by clicking the "upload" buttons on the left, circled in red:
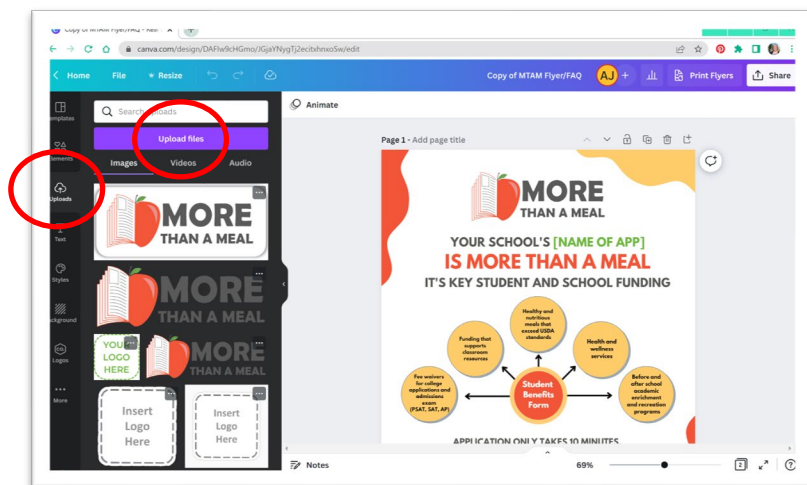
5. Once you've updated all information in green font, it's time to download your graphics! Click the "share" button on the top right, then click "download," circled in red:
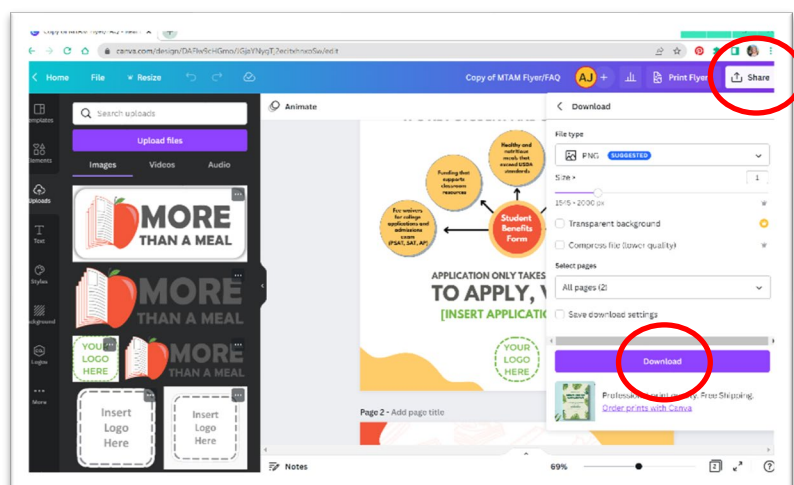
6. Share your graphics on your website, social media channels, or print them out to distribute to your families!

Who should I contact if I need assistance or have questions?

For additional assistance with this toolkit and how to customize your materials, please contact the San Diego Hunger Coalition's Hunger Free Kids Coordinator, Ashley Jeznach at: ashley@sdhunger.org.

OUTREACH CALENDAR

To support a successful launch of this campaign and increase participation in Student Benefit Forms, we have provided the recommended timeline below for how to use and schedule all the materials and steps in the More Than a Meal toolkit.

WEEK 1	1. Download all social media graphics, flyers, and the letter to parents. Fill in your information and add your logo to all materials. 2. Post information to your website homepage as well as your nutrition services website. See Page 8.
WEEK 2	1. Send the letter to parents and caregivers (Page 9). Include with your welcome packets or send home with students on first day of school.
WEEK 3	1. Distribute flyers at an Open House or similar event or send flyer #1 home with students (Page 10). 2. Send text message #1 (Page 12) to all parents and caregivers.
WEEK 4	1. Record robocall script (Page 12). Have your More Than a Meal Captain and team call all parents/caregivers throughout the week. 2. Post "Social Media Graphic 1" to all social media channels with provided caption.
WEEK 5	1. Post "Social Media Graphic 2" to all social media channels with provide caption.
WEEK 6	1. Post "Social Media Graphic 3" to all social media channels with provided caption. 2. Send flyer #2 home with students (Page 10).
WEEK 7	1. Send text message #2 (Page 12) to all parents and caregivers.
WEEK 8	1. Have your More Than a Meal Captain and team use the live call script to call families that have not yet submitted their forms (Page 13).

BEST PRACTICES

1. Rename the application to something that focuses on all the benefits in addition to school meals. For example, "Student Benefits Form" or "School Funding Form."

2. Decrease language barriers by offering the application in all languages spoken in your district.

3. Include your Student Benefits Form with mandatory forms (registration forms, health forms) that you are sending to families.

4. Send Reminders! After forms are sent out, assume it will take multiple touch points for families to both receive the message and take action. For a suggested plan on how to schedule multiple touch points, reference the outreach calendar on page 6 of this toolkit.

5. While we've done our best to provide a generalized list of typical school benefits, please double check if all benefits in this toolkit are available in your district and adjust language accordingly. For example: home internet and transportation discounts, etc.

6. Incentives! If you are able, providing an incentive for top application-collecting schools. Examples below:

    a. Cash prize to top 5 application collecting schools. Suggested funding for incentives may come from general fund or Superintendent's discretionary fund.
    b. New coffee machine, pizza party, etc. These items may be donated or sourced from the local community.

7. Identify a More Than a Meal Captain at each school. The captain will be the key point of reference for this project. Their responsibilities include goal setting, scheduling, and tracking outreach, tracking applications, celebrating small victories.

WEBSITE CONTENT AND GRAPHICS

Parents/caregivers regularly look to school websites as a timely and trusted source of information. Help your families connect to their Student Benefits Form by adding a link to your district, school, and nutrition department websites.

The more than a meal logo, graphics and language are free to use and promote through your networks. Here's how to get started:

1. Contact your website administrators and ask them to add a link to your meal application

2. Options of content to add to your website:

Option 1:

Step 1- Copy and paste this language to your website
This year's [NAME OF APP] provides more than a meal! [NAME OF APP] connects families and students to other benefits and determines key funding for [DISTRICT/SCHOOL]. We need all parents and caregivers to take action. **APPLY TODAY** (link to form).

Step 2- Add the logo below to your website to use as a link to the application

Option 2:

Upload one of the social media graphics from Page 11 of this toolkit to your website and include a link to the application.

LETTER TO PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

This letter outlines the variety of resources that parents/caregivers and schools will receive after parents complete the application.

We recommend beginning the campaign by sending this letter to all parents/caregivers. Suggested distribution is to include the letter with your enrollment package or sending the letter home with students on the first day of school.

Items that vary across school districts are highlighted in green for your convenience. To adapt this letter with your school's information, please add your logo and edit everything highlighted in green. Delete any sections that are not applicable to your district (see #5 on Page 7). **Editing hack**: use the "Replace" option in Word to save time.

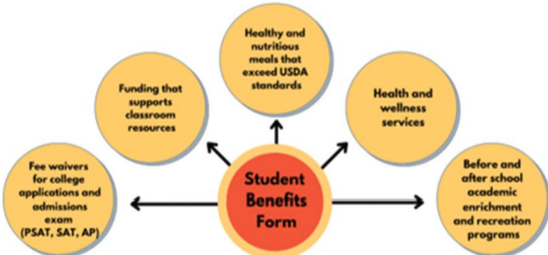Editable version of this letter, please click here.

August 2022

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

If school meals are provided at no cost, why should you fill out the [NAME OF APP]?

This year's [NAME OF APP] provides more than a meal! [NAME OF APP] connects families and students to other benefits and determines key funding for [DISTRICT/SCHOOL].

Connecting families and students to other benefits: Families that complete the [NAME OF APP] may be eligible to receive discounts for other services such as home internet, transportation, and SAT tests. Below are other benefits your child's school and your family may receive upon filling out the [NAME OF APP].

Key funding for schools: By completing the [NAME OF APP] you are directly investing in your child's education and the children and families in your community. The [NAME OF APP] provides data that secures critical state and federal education funding for your child's school.

APPLY TODAY: We need all parents and caregivers to take action by completing the confidential [NAME OF APP] online or through your school, even if school meals are provided at no cost for all students. Completing the form takes less than 10 minutes.

WHERE TO FIND [NAME OF APP]:
♦ ONLINE: Our online platforms are secure. Apply online at: [INSERT APP LINK]
♦ IN PERSON: [INSERT WHERE PARENTS/CAREGIVERS CAN PICK UP APP]
♦ BY MAIL: [INSERT WHEN APP WAS/WILL BE MAILED]

EVERY FORM COUNTS! Every form that is submitted means additional resources for our schools and students.

Your information is secure. All information provided is completely confidential. We will not share your information for any other purpose.

Please complete the [NAME OF APP] by [DEADLINE]. For more information, please call [PHONE NUMBER].

Thank you for providing this information and for helping to ensure that our school continues to receive the critical funding needed to serve our students.

Sincerely,

YOUR LOGO HERE

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FLYERS

This flyer will help educate parents/caregivers on the importance of the More Than a Meal campaign and to generate more application participation.

We recommend printing these flyers and sending them home with students or handing them out at your Open House or anyplace parent communication is distributed.

Items that vary across school districts are in green font for your convenience. To adapt these graphics with your school's information, please add your logo and edit everything in green. Delete any sections that are not applicable to your district (see #5 on Page 7).

Editable versions of these graphics: Canva Template Link | Google Drive

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

To help reinforce importance of the More Than a Meal campaign, post these graphics on your social media channels with the captions provided and a direct link to the application.

Items that vary across school districts are in green font for your convenience. To adapt these graphics with your school's information, please add your logo and edit everything in green. Delete any sections that are not applicable to your district (see #5 on Page 7).

Editable versions of these graphics: Canva Template Link | Google Drive
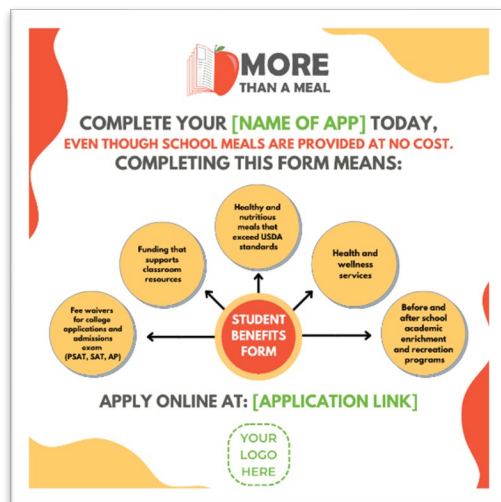
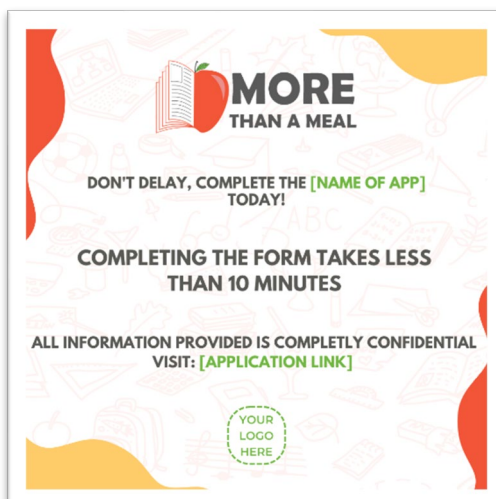**Social Media Graphic 1**
Caption: This year, [NAME OF APP] means more than just free meals. [NAME OF APP] means more resources for your child and our school. Fill yours out today at: [APP LINK].

Social Media Graphic 2
Caption: Every form counts! More forms submitted means more resources for your child and our school. Fill your [NAME OF APP] out today at: [APP LINK]

Social Media Graphic 3
Caption: More [NAME OF APP] means more resources for your child and our school! Completing the form takes less than 10 minutes and all information provided is completely confidential. Fill yours out today at: [APP LINK]!

Items that vary across school districts are highlighted in green for your convenience. To adapt these messages with your school's information, please edit everything in green. **Editing hack**: use the "Edit → Find and Replace" option to save time.

Editable versions of these scripts can be found here.

TEXT MESSAGES
Help your families connect to their Student Benefits Form by sending one of these messages with a direct link to the application. Parents may be more inclined to fill out the form with quick access to the link.

1. This year's [NAME OF APP] provides more than a meal! [NAME OF APP] connects families and students to other benefits and determines key funding for [SCHOOL]. Apply today [APP LINK]

2. Hello, this is [SCHOOL], with an important message. We need all parents and caregivers to take action by completing the confidential [NAME OF APP]. Even though meals are provided at no cost this year, families that complete the [NAME OF APP] may be eligible to receive discounts for other services such as home internet, transportation, and SAT tests. Completing the form takes less than 10 minutes. Apply online at [APP LINK]

ROBOCALL SCRIPT
This script is to be pre-recorded and electronically sent out to all parents/caregivers.

Please consider the use of this or a similar message to encourage all parents/caregivers to complete Student Benefits Form.

1. Hello, this is [NAME, TITLE, SCHOOL].

2. I am calling to invite to you to fill out [NAME OF APP]. It provides more than a meal. Families that complete the [NAME OF APP] may be eligible to receive discounts for other services such as home internet, transportation, and SAT tests.

3. We need all parents and caregivers to take action by completing the confidential [NAME OF APP] even if school meals are provided at no cost for all students.

4. Completing the form takes less than 10 minutes

5. To apply online today, visit [APP LINK]. Thank you for your time and support.

LIVE CALL SCRIPT

For one last push in increasing application submissions, use this call script for a seamless conversation with parents/caregivers who have not yet submitted their forms. This guide will help to reduce errors and provides concise information. As a best practice, have FAQ accessible for common additional questions.

Please consider the use of this or a similar message to encourage all parents/caregivers to complete the Student Benefits Form.

Items that vary across school districts are highlighted in green for your convenience. To adapt this script with your school's information, please edit everything in green. **Editing hack**: use the "Edit → Find and Replace" option to save time.

Editable versions of these scripts can be found here.

1. Hello, this is [NAME, TITLE, SCHOOL].

2. This year we're making extra efforts to make sure our families and schools have access to all the resources available. One way we're doing that is making sure families have filled out their [NAME OF APP]. Have you filled out yours?
   a. *If answer is YES- skip to last bullet*

3. Families that complete the [NAME OF APP] may be eligible to receive discounts for other services such as home internet, transportation, and SAT tests. Have you filled out the [NAME OF APP]?

4. We need all parents and caregivers to take action by completing the confidential [NAME OF APP] even if school meals are provided at no cost for all students. Do you know where to find this form?
   a. If answer is NO: [PROVIDE APP LINK OR WHERE TO PICK UP APP IN PERSON].

5. Completing the form takes less than 10 minutes

6. To apply online today, visit [APP LINK] Thank you for your time and support.

FAQs

As a best practice add FAQs to your website for parents to have access. Keep this FAQ sheet handy for all staff making calls to parents/caregivers.

Items that vary across school districts are highlighted in green for your convenience. To adapt this language with your school's information, please edit everything in green.

Editable versions of these scripts can be found here.

1. **What is the "More than a Meal" Campaign?**
   "More than a Meal" is an outreach campaign aimed at ensuring that parents/caregivers complete and submit the [NAME OF APP] in order for your child and child's school to receive funding for additional resources such as before and after school enrichment and recreation programs, fee waivers for exams and many more resources.

2. **If school meals are provided at no cost, why should we fill out the [NAME OF APP]?**
   This year's [NAME OF APP] provides more than a meal! [NAME OF APP] connects families and students to other benefits and determines key funding for [DISTRICT/SCHOOL].

3. **What is the deadline for submitting the [NAME OF APP]?**
   All applications and forms must be submitted by [DEADLINE].

4. **How does my child benefit from [NAME OF APP]?**
   Families that complete the [NAME OF APP] may be eligible to receive discounts for other services such as home internet, transportation, and SAT tests.

5. **Is this application confidential?**
   YES! This form is 100% confidential and will only be used to ensure additional resources for your child and their school.

6. **If I have any questions, who do I contact?**
   Please call/email [NAME, TITLE, PHONE, EMAIL].