

Welcome & Welcome Back!!

While the start of the school year looks a little different for everyone, I wanted to share with you some good news that schools nationwide received last week. The USDA extended a waiver that allows schools to serve **free breakfast and lunch to ALL students, from the first day of school through 12/31/20 or as long as funds stay available**. We are thrilled with this news as it means that we will be able to provide all Old Colony RVTHS students with nutritious and nourishing food for free that will support them, both in school and at home.

What this means for your family and for Old Colony RVTHS

- Your children, ages 0-21, will receive a healthy breakfast and lunch every school day, at no cost, in a safe and welcoming environment. This applies to students who are attending classes in school or virtual classes at home, or a hybrid combination of these models.
- You may pick up meals for any of your children who are remote learners at Old Colony or other meal sites that are distributing meals.
- It allows Old Colony RVTHS to provide the most nourishing and appetizing meals possible for your children. When your children eat school meals, it helps the school system by providing federal funds to the district. The more meals we serve, the more funding we receive, allowing us to focus on meal quality, variety and innovative practices (new recipes, frozen take home meals, etc.). If your children have never before participated in school meals, consider trying the program this year!
- It helps you save time and money. By allowing us to prepare meals for your children you won't have to plan and shop for your children's breakfast and lunch.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has requested that the USDA extend free meals for all students for the **entire** school year. However, as of now, the USDA has only allowed this through December 31. Therefore, families should still submit a household application to determine eligibility for free and reduced price school meals. This will also allow students to qualify for any additional benefits and ensure a seamless transition when schools move back to a paid program (if the waiver is not extended for January to June 2021).

The application is available to download at <https://oldcolony.us/about-the-school/cafeteria/free-reduced-application-information/>

In addition, we also encourage families to apply for SNAP benefits. SNAP provides monthly cash benefits (on an EBT card) to purchase groceries for eligible families. To apply for SNAP, visit www.startwithsnap.org or call the Project Bread FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333. If you are unsure whether your family is eligible, the FoodSource Hotline can assist you with eligibility questions. Families approved for SNAP are directly eligible to receive free meals at school and do not need to fill out an application for free and reduced price meals.

Meals will be available to be picked up at Old Colony twice per week for all children ages 0-21 who are not receiving in school instruction. Pick up times are Tuesday & Thursday 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM or 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM. There will be a drive through pick up station at the main entrance of the school. A staff member will bring the meals to your vehicle. Orders for Old Colony students can be placed on-line. Please check out the [cafeteria information page](#), select the box that says Pick Up Meals To-Go. If you have other children who do not attend Old Colony and are not already in school receiving a meal that day, you will have an option to pick up a meal for them as well. Please look for a link under the same Pick Up Meals To-Go box. Please reach out with any questions you might have. Your children are the reason we do our jobs and we are here to make sure that they are fueled with good food!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Crystal Andrade". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "C".

Crystal Andrade
School Nutrition Director
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School