

## For Immediate Release

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### **Dairy Farmers Help Moo-ve Student Meals**

*Grant program helps schools redesign cafeteria service*

**Creve Coeur, IL- September 2020** The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the landscape of both learning and eating for students across Illinois. While technology has facilitated distance learning, hybrid and in-person education models, feeding students virtually is not an option. Like many things, lunchtime in the cafeteria is “on hold” for thousands of students this school year.

Fortunately, LaSalle Elementary in Creve Coeur District 76 recently received a helping hand from local dairy farmers to meet the challenges of providing nutritious food outside the cafeteria. The school was one of 12 in Illinois awarded a **Dollars for Dairy** grant to help them make the most of student meals. This fall, that means serving them in hallways, classrooms, pop-up cafes and even curbside pickup tents.

**Dollars for Dairy**, funded by local dairy farmers, is coordinated through St. Louis District Dairy Council (SLDDC), a nonprofit nutrition education organization. While the program is in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, the organization saw a 173% jump in applications this year. The increase is attributed to schools overhauling their feeding plans to comply with social distancing requirements.

“Making school meals mobile has created the need for equipment like milk coolers, insulated delivery bags and rolling carts,” explains Monica Nyman, Senior Nutrition Educator with SLDDC. “The location of school meals may have changed, but the need for nutrients like protein, potassium, Vitamin D and calcium remains. Dairy foods deliver all of these. And thanks to local farmers, they are delivered safe, cold, and ready to eat!”

LaSalle Elementary received funds for insulated rolling coolers to transport dairy products as part of its curbside pickup for breakfast and lunch. The district is currently following a hybrid style of instruction, so meals are provided even for kids who are not in the building.

“Dollars for Dairy is yet another way Illinois farmers contribute to their communities by providing healthy nutritious foods,” notes Nyman. “And this year, farmers are also helping schools go the extra mile to ensure students are fueled for academic success, wherever they are learning.”

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

To schedule an interview with Monica Nyman on the Dollars for Dairy program, please call 309-681-4629 or email at [mnyman@stldairycouncil.org](mailto:mnyman@stldairycouncil.org). For more information about the health benefits of dairy, please visit St. Louis District Dairy Council at [stldairycouncil.org](http://stldairycouncil.org)