

Lakewood Serves Up Meals All Summer Long

At the Lakewood School District, feeding kids is a year-round business.

By leveraging community partnerships, the district has created a successful summer meal program that reaches hundreds of children every day throughout the summer.

Just a few days after school lets out for the summer, the food service staff begins serving up breakfast, lunch and dinner at 18 school and community-based sites. Meal service continues until just a few days before school starts.

Working closely with a host of community partners, including the township Parks and Recreation Department, the Girl Scouts of America and a local charter school, the district makes feeding kids an integral part of its mission.

"We've seen even more growth this year," says Cory Goldfarb, the district's food service director. "For some of these kids, these are the only meals they get. The program is absolutely essential."

And the district is always looking to add new sites.

"It's really simple to become a site," Goldfarb explains. "You fill out a form, attend a training and send in the paperwork each week. The food is free. You can feed kids twice a day. Why would anyone say no to that?"

He adds that marketing efforts start months in advance and continue throughout the summer, helping the district to feed thousands of children all summer long — helping to ensure they return to school healthy and ready to learn.

