



## *Press Release*

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### **10 Cents a Meal Grants Awarded to 138 Statewide Applicants**

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LANSING – The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has selected 138 grantees across the state for its 10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids & Farms grantees for 2020-2021, many of which are first-time grantees.

The Fiscal Year 2021 state budget, approved by the Michigan Legislature and signed into law by Governor Gretchen Whitmer, increased funding from \$575,000 to \$2 million for the 10 Cents a Meal Program, which allows the program to expand statewide and include early childhood centers as eligible for the grant funding.

“Providing healthy meals for children and supporting our state’s growers is a win-win for Michigan,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice. “The 10 Cents a Meal program helps meet a Top 10 state strategic education goal of improving the health safety, and wellness of learners. I want to thank the legislature and governor for expanding the program to benefit many more communities across our state.”

10 Cents A Meal for Michigan's Kids & Farms (10 Cents a Meal) is a state-funded program providing schools with matching incentive funding up to 10 cents per meal to purchase and serve Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes. Initially a pilot program launched in 2016, 10 Cents a Meal has been expanded and is available to schools statewide for the first time ever.

A total of 138 grantees from the upper and lower peninsulas that serve over 406,000 children have been approved for the program to improve daily nutrition and eating habits for children. Through the program, schools and early childhood education centers are able to purchase locally and invest in Michigan’s agriculture.

“We’ve seen the success of the program,” said state Senator Wayne Schmidt, who chairs the Senate K-12 and Department of Education appropriations subcommittee. “We know the importance of nutrition for school-age children, and we know the importance of Michigan agriculture. When you can blend the two together, it equals success. We want to continue that.

“The COVID crisis has highlighted health care needs,” he added. “Obviously, one of the best ways to deal with any health challenge is good nutrition. It’s fresh fruits and vegetables, and Michigan has a lot of them.”

First-time awardees include Detroit Public Schools Community District, the state’s largest school district, which received a grant of \$100,000. “Feeding Detroit’s school children healthy and nutritious food grown right here in Michigan is a win for both our hardworking Michigan farmers and for DPSCD. Every child deserves access to the best fresh produce available, so I am so pleased and excited to see the 10 Cents a Meal program will be available here in Detroit,” said state Senator Stephanie Chang, who represents Detroit.

In this time of greater food insecurity due to the pandemic, food service programs are playing an essential role in delivering healthy, nutritious meals to Michigan’s children. The 10 Cents a Meal program amplifies local purchasing power while also providing a market for small-to-medium scale growers.

“As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I am proud of our state for coming together during a particularly challenging time to increase funding for the 10 Cents a Meal program,” said state Representative Sarah Anthony. “Right here in Greater Lansing, we have seen an unprecedented level of need from working families and our students need more support than ever at home. The \$113,000 in funds for schools in Ingham County will surely go a long way.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has also continued to shed light on the racial disparities in health outcomes and nutrition, and the 10 Cents a Meal program will play an important role in closing the equity gap, so all children have the resources they need to thrive,” Rep. Anthony added.

MDE is assisted in the program by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, which provides expertise on Michigan-grown products and participates in food service director trainings; the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems, which conducts monthly food service director surveys for evaluation; and Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, which conducts stakeholder interviews and provides communications support.

To learn more, please visit [www.tencentsmichigan.org](http://www.tencentsmichigan.org). For the list of 2020-21 award grantees, visit <https://www.tencentsmichigan.org/about>.

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