

## Press Clippings 03/17/20

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### Schools provide breakfasts, lunches to students because of school closures

By: Mark Welsh and Madhu Krishnamurthy



Walking a couple of blocks in the cold Michael Brakus, 10, of Round Lake picks up breakfast and lunch meals for his three brothers and sisters at Ellis Elementary School as part of the grab-n-go breakfast and lunch service for students in Round Lake Unit District 116 because of coronavirus-related school closures.



Lillyoni Braxton, 10, of Round Lake picks up breakfast and lunch with her friend, Judy Fullington, as part of Round Lake Unit District 116's grab-n-go breakfast and lunch service. The meals are available through the Illinois State Board of Education Child Nutrition Program because of coronavirus-related school closures.



Heather Bennett, director of Engagement and Community Relations for the Round Lake Area Unit District 116, stands ready to hand out breakfast and lunch meals to all families who show up as part of the grab-n-go breakfast and lunch service. The meals, which consisted of turkey sandwiches, milk, apples and oranges and a Twix bar, were provided because of coronavirus-related school closures.



Walking a couple of blocks in the cold, Michael Brakus, 10, of Round Lake picks up grab-n-go breakfast and lunch meals for his three other brothers and sisters who attend classes in Round Lake Area Unit District 116. Michael attends Murphy Elementary School.



Lillyoni Braxton, 10, of Round Lake picks up grab-n-go breakfast and lunch with her friend at Ellis Elementary School in Round Lake Area Unit District 116.

Wearing an open green coat and walking in the cold a couple of blocks from his house, Michael Brakus, 10, of Round Lake Beach made a trip to pick up some groceries.

But instead of going to a store, Michael was headed to Ellis Elementary School, where Round Lake Unit District 116 officials were providing grab-and-go breakfasts and lunches because of coronavirus-related school closures.

Michael, who attends Murphy Elementary, picked up meals that consisted of turkey sandwiches, apples, oranges, milk and a Twix bar for his brothers and sisters, who were waiting at home with their parents.

The meals are available from 8 to 10 a.m. through Thursday from the Illinois State Board of Education Child Nutrition Program, the district said. The program provides one breakfast and one lunch meal for each child enrolled in District 116.

The grab-n-go meals were available for pickup at any of six school locations in the district. Approximately 425 students received meals Monday, district officials said.

"They (District 116 students) will be provided a breakfast and a lunch, which is a requirement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture food and breakfast program, which is the same type of food that would be served if we were in school," said Pamela Kibbons, the district's assistant superintendent of business.

Sheila Faul, mother of two from Round Lake Beach, said there are a lot of children in the district who depend on these meals from the schools.

"It's great, it's great. I think it makes a difference," Faul said.

School districts across the suburbs are working to find ways to serve meals to students and families in need.

**Elgin Area School District U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders** said the district will provide free prepackaged meals and snacks to everyone under 18 years old without asking questions or requiring paperwork. Students can pick up meals between 10 and 11:30 a.m. Tuesday through Thursday, Monday, March 25 and March 27. For pickup sites, visit [u-46.org](http://u-46.org).

"We will need the help of many employees to make it happen," Sanders wrote in a message to the school community.

Crystal Lake Elementary District 47 will offer free grab-and-go breakfast/lunch meals starting Tuesday through Friday, the week of March 23 through 27, and March 30.

The district is working in collaboration with Crystal Lake High School District 155 and food service provider Sodexo to serve all students, including siblings under 18 under the National School Lunch Program requirements.

Food will be distributed from 8 a.m. to noon at Crystal Lake Central High School, 45 W. Franklin Ave., Crystal Lake. Additional locations might be added based on need, officials said.

Parents are urged to fill out a [survey](#) posted on District 47's website so officials can determine quantities and locations for food distribution.