FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 17, 2020

Community partners work with St. Helens School District to provide meal services

(ST. HELENS, OREGON) - The St. Helens School District has planned a new way to make their meal services available to children in the area age 0-18, and Columbia County has joined in the effort by providing a bus service location at the Columbia County Road Department.

As part of the school closures mandated by Gov. Kate Brown, it was indicated that to continue receiving state funding, the district must find a way to continue providing meals to students. During the past four weeks, the strategy behind the service has evolved. On the district's first day of service in March, they served approximately 200 meals. By April 7, they were serving over 2,000 meals per day.

Initially, two drive-through programs were set up at the St. Helens Middle School and Lewis & Clark Elementary. A family survey was then issued to identify community needs concerning access to meal assistance during the closure.

"The primary barrier was lack of a vehicle or cost of gas and just the fear of going into large public gatherings," St. Helens School District Business Manager, Jessica Seay, said. "Even though we're social distancing's, families didn't want to leave the house if they didn't have to."

Based on the survey data, the St. Helens School District set up 10 satellite sites around the community, which went into operation on Monday, April 3. These added locations will help get meals out to those pockets of the community where families struggled to access the drive-through programs.

"We've been working with the school district through the Gable Road Project and they reached out knowing we had the parking lot there," Assistant Public Works Director, Tristan Wood, said. "I said, 'Absolutely.' Whatever we can do to help."

Access to the meals service is not tied to enrollment at the St Helens School District. Meals will be provided for any child aged 18 or under.

"We're serving a lot of kids and we're happy to do it," Seay said. "We appreciate the County's partnership, as well as the community and faith-based organizations as partners. It's a community effort."

Service ~ Engagement ~ Connection ~ Innovation

Drive Thru Service:

Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Children will receive a hot lunch and cold breakfast for the next morning.

Lewis & Clark Elementary
(West parking lot facing IGA Red Apple)
111 S. 9th Street - St. Helens

McBride Elementary
(Front parking lot)
2774 Columbia Boulevard - St. Helens

Bus Service:

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays ONLY.
Children will receive two lunches and breakfasts on Mondays and Wednesdays. One breakfast and lunch will be served on Fridays. Instructional materials will also be available on Friday.

11a.m. - 12 p.m.

Columbia City Elementary
2000 2nd Street - Columbia City

Columbia County Road Department (replacing McBride bus stop)
1054 Oregon St. - St. Helens

Forest Park Apartments
2545 Columbia Boulevard - St. Helens

St. Helens Missionary Baptist Church (replacing Gable Park Apartments bus stop)
2625 Gable Road - St. Helens

Yankton Arthur Academy
33035 Pittsburg Road - St. Helens

1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

CRFR - Deer Island Station
33710 Canaan Road - Deer Island\

Deer Island Community Church
34971 Canaan Road - Deer Island

Grace Baptist Church
58690 Ross Road – Warren

Intersection of East Meissner Road & Canaan Road

Deer Island

Pacific Athletic Club
320 A Street - Columbia City

Please remember social distancing protocols and stay at least six feet away from others. Please wash hands prior to coming to the distribution site. Families must return home prior to consuming meals.

COLUMBIA COUNTY ROAD DEPT.