

Dear Parents of Laton Unified School District,

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a period of tremendous stress and transformation for school nutrition programs Nationwide. Throughout these challenges, the school nutrition industry has pivoted time and again to deliver on one of the largest emergency feeding responses in history.

Now, we are facing another extraordinary task of feeding students now that schools have re-opened. We are facing new challenges as the pandemic is causing serious disruptions to supply chains across the country. These disruptions are impacting every industry, but the School Nutrition Supply Chain is in many ways more impacted than other.

- Manufacturers across the nation are experiencing scarcity of raw materials, and rapidly increasing ingredient costs.
- The demand on gas distribution facilities having to shift resources in the supply of Oxygen to COVID impacted states and unable to supply Nitrogen for processing plants required in the quick freezing of items delaying or halting production.
- Manufacturers continue to be challenged with available trucking, labor, ingredient inflation, and demand from competing foodservice sectors.
- Supplier capacity is limited to the ability to staff production lines, cold storage, and source available trucking for transit.
- Demand for corrugated boxes has increased during COVID driving packaging costs and limiting availability.

All of these challenges impact our ability to provide meals to our students. Our menus have changes weekly, and sometimes daily. With that being said the Child Nutrition Staff at Laton are working hard to provide the best meals we can. We appreciate your patients with the menu changes that you may be hearing about from your students. We will be making a weekly menu and posting it so that parents', students', and staff will have the best information available.

Thank you for taking the time to read this update.

Yours sincerely,
Susan Giles
Food Service Director
Laton Unified School District
sgiles@latonunified.org