



## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2017.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Overview/Summary**

The *Summer Lunch at the Library* program is an innovative use of the library space, which addresses the need for low income students who receive free lunch at their public school to continue to receive assistance over the summer, with a twist. As in many localities, there are children who rely on the federal school lunch program for the daily nutrition they may not receive at home. Chesterfield County Public Library (CCPL) locations serve these same neighborhoods and are committed to serving as a local hub and trusted local government agency for families of diverse economic and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, CCPL has had a long time relationship with the school district in support of minimizing summer learning loss. There is clear correlation between nutrition and school success.

In the Spring of 2015, library staff members began exploring the options for providing free lunches to county children during summer months. We investigated the qualifying factors and learned about community providers. Staff members expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to participate and administrative support was obtained. The addition of activities and resources that tap into the library's role in facilitating reading and learning further benefits the participants and their families. We not only served 1,085 lunches in 2015 and 1,102 lunches in 2016, we also improved the relevance of the library to the people who need us the most by serving meals and building relationships with individuals who now know about the many ways the library can help them better their lives and achieve their goals.

### **The Problem/Challenge/Situation**

Students who miss breakfast and lunch are more prone to sickness, tardiness and absence. They are also more likely to be distracted and have difficulty paying attention, which ultimately results in lower scores on achievement tests. A healthy body correlates directly to a healthy mind. Millions of children across the country depend on free and reduced price lunches. Therefore, during summer months when public schools in Virginia are on hiatus, thousands of children go without those crucial meals that help proper development.

Each year the Food and Nutrition Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA,) oversees the distribution of over two million lunches nationally through their Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and in 2014, they provided 57,306 lunches in the state of Virginia alone. The program is administered on a state level by the Virginia Department of Health and run locally by SFSP-approved sponsors such as nonprofits, camps, and local government agencies. This is where we stepped up.

In late 2014 and early 2015, CCPL staff learned about the USDA’s SFSP through library journals, independent research and national media attention. We were drawn to the idea because we are often characterized as a hub for the community that is not home, work, or school; often referred to as a “third place.” According to Wikipedia, “In community building, the third place (or third space) is the social surroundings separate from the two usual social environments of home (“first place”) and the office (“second place”). ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third\\_place](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_place), accessed 3/15/17)

Through daily observation and creating neighborhood profiles of the communities nearest each library, CCPL managers unanimously agreed to explore the possibilities for all

county libraries that met the federal eligibility requirements. Distribution sites must be located in an area where at least half of the children are from families with total incomes below the 185 percent of the federal poverty level. Meeting this requirement makes children eligible for receiving free and reduced-price meals at school.

Chesterfield County Public Library, with help from local program sponsors coordinating with the USDA, used Census data to identify zip codes surrounding libraries in our county that would qualify CCPL to become distribution sites. We had facilities in two areas of the county in 2015 and three in 2016 (and four in 2017) that met the federal criteria of poverty levels of children.

### **How the Program Was Carried Out**

In Spring 2015, CCPL librarians began researching local sponsors to prepare and deliver the *Summer Lunch at the Library* and decided to partner with Victory Church of God in Richmond, VA. A library committee was put together, comprised of management staff from the two participating libraries. They chose dates, times, publicity tactics, and planned the operations of each site's program. The committee met monthly starting in April 2015 and worked side-by-side with the sponsoring program director to determine how to facilitate each site's program. In early June, the program sponsor provided training to library staff who would be responsible for food handling, storage, counting and dispersal at each distribution site.

It is important to mention that from the very first committee meeting while planning the programs facilitation, an emphasis was placed on the opportunity to provide simple activities that not only subtly taught nutrition and healthy activity but was fun and provided

families distraction. Therefore, a simple craft activity, story time or nutrition game was planned for each day.

The *Summer Lunch at the Library* program ran from Monday, June 22 to Friday, August 14. Lunches were served on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at Chester Library from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Lunches were also served at Meadowdale Library on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We served a total of 1,085 lunches at our two distribution sites.

In late 2015, CCPL staff met and agreed we wanted to do the program again. Because we would have more time to prepare, we planned to explore different program sponsors. That is when we connected with Child Care Resources (CCR), a nonprofit organization that provides the SFSP to more than 10,000 children and has a Chesterfield County location.

Therefore, in early 2016, CCPL switched sponsors and began a partnership with Child Care Resources Inc. With CCR's help and utilizing U.S. Census data, we identified three areas served by our libraries that qualified for the USDA's SFSP. This time, a CCPL committee began meeting monthly starting in January and worked alongside the sponsoring program director to determine how to facilitate each site's program. In June, CCR's Public Health Professional trained participating library staff and volunteers responsible for proper food handling, storage, counting and dispersal at each distribution site.

In 2016, the *Summer Lunch at the Library* program ran from Monday, June 20 to Wednesday, July 29. Lunches were served on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the Chester and Ettrick-Matoaca Libraries from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Lunches were also served at the

Meadowdale Library on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

We served a total of 1,102 lunches at our three distribution sites.

### **Financing and Staffing**

Monetary costs were comprised mainly of serving utensils and promotional support. In 2016, this involved:

- \$1619.00 print publicity including bookmarks, posters and yard signs
- \$134.00 for products including plates, napkins and plastic utensils

The 2016 program involved about 50 staff hours, including:

- Researching and selecting a partner organization
- Planning committee meetings
- Training for staff on food handling
- Creating and communicating instructions
- Recording and submitting statistics

### **Results of the Program**

Chesterfield County's *Summer Lunch at the Library* participants received convenient and nutritious meals that followed a school menu. They also received free books, educational activities and the library helped combat summer slide by keeping students school ready because of the program.

When the Library of Virginia learned what we were doing, they immediately offered to contribute materials to our *Summer Lunch at the Library* programs. In 2016 hundreds of books and nutrition games were donated to each distribution site by the Library of Virginia.

Consequently, during the early weeks of the 2016 program, almost every child walked away with a brand new book reinforcing the year-round connection between CCPL and their family.

The *Summer Lunch at the Library* program strengthened the idea that libraries, in general, and CCPL specifically, are community hubs where local needs are met. Libraries throughout our system receive phone calls from citizens asking how they could volunteer for the program, make monetary contributions or “somehow get involved.” The goodwill generated by the *Summer Lunch at the Library* program in our neighborhoods is felt by all ten of our libraries and Chesterfield County government as a whole.

### **Award Criteria**

Libraries have tremendous impact in their communities, but it can be difficult to reach those in our community with the greatest need. Serving meals throughout the summer gave us an innovative way to reach our underserved customers. Through this partnership, we have distributed 2,187 free lunches – but more importantly, we have been able to offer other services. The opportunity to provide information about nutrition; strengthen relationships with our customers through learning games and activities; distribute books and offer literacy support; and increase neighborhood pride surrounding our libraries has had far greater impact than the lunches alone. We anticipate that in 2017 we will be even more successful and there will be more occasions to further our mission of being a community of engaged and informed

citizens who have the knowledge and skills to better their lives personally and collectively. Best of all, other public libraries can work with other government agencies and schools to implement a similar program in their jurisdictions. A strong library creates a strong community. A strong community creates a strong county. A strong county creates a strong state. And finally, a strong state contributes to a strong nation.

**Supplemental Materials:**







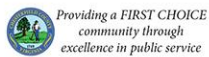
**Lunches served from:**

June 20 - July 27  
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Chester Library**

**Tuesdays and  
Wednesdays**

Please call 804-318-8977  
for more information.



**CCPL** CHESTERFIELD  
COUNTY PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

**Eitrick-Matoaca Library**

**Tuesdays and  
Wednesdays**

Please call 804-318-8688  
for more information.

**Meadowdale Library**

**Mondays, Tuesdays  
and Wednesdays**

Please call 804-318-8778  
for more information.



**SUMMER MEALS  
FOR  
KIDS & TEENS**  
Being served  
in your community

**OPEN to All Children  
18 and younger  
NO Enrollment, NO Cost!**