



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“Lunch at the Library” Serves Free School Lunches with a Helping of Fun
to Kids during Summer Break**

**Popular program for children of low-income families expanded to 14 libraries
and is served weekdays, June 13 – August 5**

Los Angeles, CA – To ensure that students who receive free school lunches won't go hungry during the summer break, the Los Angeles Public Library, in partnership with the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, is serving free weekday lunches at 14 libraries from June 13 to August 5, 2016. The free lunches meet USDA nutrition guidelines, and are available to anyone age 18 or younger.

Along with a nutritious meal, the library offers engaging activities to participating children, such as crafts and puppet shows, as well as the opportunity to sign up for the Los Angeles Public Library “Read for the Win” Summer Reading Program, which runs concurrently with summer lunch.

This is the 4th year of serving summer lunch at the library. Last year, the library served more than 12,000 meals during the eight-week program. With new locations added, the goal is to serve an even larger number of meals to children in need. No documentation or enrollment of children is required.

“Hunger during summer break is an issue in several communities, and the Los Angeles Public Library’s summer lunch program is reducing the nutritional gap faced by many children,” said City Librarian John F. Szabo. “Studies have linked nutrition to cognitive abilities. Providing healthy lunches can help increase a child’s ability to learn new skills and can improve performance in school.”

The program is part of a statewide collaboration between the California Library Association and the California Summer Meal Coalition. The partnership between libraries and summer meal programs was cultivated in 2013, after California Food Policy

(more)

Peter Persic, Public Relations & Marketing Director

Advocates reported that in 2012 only 17% of children in California receiving a free/reduced-price lunch during the school year also participated in a summer meal program.

The free lunch program is available weekdays, June 13 to August 5 from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at most participating branches (Echo Park Branch serves lunch from noon to 12:50 p.m., Exposition Park Branch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.):

- Canoga Park Branch, 20939 Sherman Way, Canoga Park 91303
- Central Library, 630 W. 5th St., L.A. 90071
- Eagle Rock Branch, 5027 Caspar Ave., L.A. 90041
- Echo Park Branch, 1410 W. Temple St., L.A. 90026
- Exposition Park Branch, 3900 S. Western Ave., L.A. 90062
- Hyde Park Branch, 2205 W. Florence Ave., L.A. 90043
- Northridge Branch, 9081 Darby Ave., Northridge 91325
- Pacoima Branch, 13605 Van Nuys Blvd, L.A. 91331
- Panorama City Branch, 14345 Roscoe Blvd., Panorama City 91402
- Pico Union Branch, 1030 S. Alvarado St., L.A. 90006
- San Pedro Branch, 931 S. Gaffey St., San Pedro 90731
- Vermont Square Branch, 1201 W. 48th St., L.A. 90037
- Vernon Branch, 4504 S. Central Ave., L.A. 90011
- Watts Branch, 10205 Compton Ave., L.A. 90002

For more information or to volunteer to help serve lunch, please call Youth Services (213) 228-7480 or visit LAPL website at www.lapl.org. For additional information about the L.A. Regional Food Bank, call (323) 234-3030 or visit lafoodbank.org.

A recipient of the nation's highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than 6 million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at www.lapl.org, and more than 18,000 public programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

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