



**NEW MEXICO FIRST**  
*People. Ideas. Progress.*

## New Mexico First and Program Share NM Newsletter

Stay Informed and Engaged

April 27, 2020



Grant Opportunity: Family Stability

Sandia National Labs' current grant opportunity is intended to support non-profit organizations that are helping families in crisis provide and sustain a stable home environment, especially for families with children. Programs should demonstrate sustainable improvement and where applicable, partnerships with other organizations to create efficiencies and avoid duplication of services. Priority will be given to programs that address: 1. Hunger relief services; 2. Short or long-term housing; 3. Workforce development serving under-employed populations. 4. Services and wrap-around support for children/families who are experiencing a temporary crisis. Deadline: May 8, 6:00 PM. Apply online at SHARE New Mexico.

[Apply Now](#)

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## Grant Opportunity: USDA Farmers to Families Food Box

USDA just released on Friday an RFP for a food box program to procure \$3 billion nationwide in "food boxes" for families in need, addressing food supply chain and emergency food relief needs resulting from COVID-19. Applications are due at 1.00 pm Eastern/11:00 am Mountain time this Friday, May 1.

The program and application for bids is intended for any entity that can procure food, assemble the food boxes, and manage the distribution of the boxes to the target end-users, this includes (but is not limited to) farmers, food processors, and food distributors who can source, assemble, and deliver food boxes for partner non-profit organizations, food banks, and food pantries that are serving individuals and families in need during this pandemic. Depending on their capacity, other capable entities like farmer cooperatives, farmers market operators, schools, and even restaurants can apply.

USDA is encouraging farmers, food processors, distributors, and other entities of all sizes to submit proposals, regardless of whether their supply and distribution scope is large or small. The proposal evaluation process will prioritize applicants who can demonstrate established relationships with emergency food relief partner organizations, a supply network of local and U.S. food producers, and who can provide boxes of eligible food items that are fresh, varied, and healthy.

[More Information](#)



## Education: Online, Out-of-School and At Home

On March 16th, Governor Lujan Grisham announced that schools would shift to a learn-at-home model for the rest of the academic year. Each School District and public charter school was instructed to develop a [Continuous Learning Plan](#) that meets the needs of their community.

Internet access will be an issue for many families in New Mexico. Staff and students may lack the resources to connect remotely. So far, over 400 internet providers have

signed the FCC's "[Keep Americans Connected Pledge](#)" to not terminate service to any customers because of their inability to pay their bills and to waive late fees that customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic. These companies also have agreed to open their Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them. Information about several of these options is available [here](#).

Cynthia Nava, former superintendent of Gadsden Public Schools and a board member of New Mexico First, calls on New Mexicans to step up and “take control of the situation. We need to be innovative and agile in reaching our kids even if we don’t do it through traditional means. The goal remains the same: for our students to have rich and robust academic progress that will enable them to learn and thrive. We have an opportunity right now to reexamine what we’ve been doing and creatively respond to children’s needs.”

Traci Curry, speaking for [New Mexico Agriculture in the Classroom](#) (NMAIC), agrees that “we’re all educators ... it takes a village to educate our children.” NMAIC is helping teachers work with families to take stock of the materials students have at home. One teacher had planned for her students to grow something from seed. NMAIC worked with her to make that part of the lesson. Teachers and families together could organize a seed hunt to find seeds already in the house, such as beans or seeds from apples. Or parents could go outside with the children and ask, “Where do we find seeds? Where do seeds come from?”



Numerous sites have learning activities that can be done at home, with or without access to the internet. The New Mexican Out-of-School-Time Network (NMOST) has a list of lists for educational activities at home.

[Click Here for Educational Activities](#)

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## What About Food?

It's a fact of New Mexican life that many of our students rely on school for their meals. Before COVID-19 shut down our schools on March 12th, New Mexico was on track to serve more than 13,500,000 school breakfasts and 19,500,000 school lunches to low-income students. So how are our students getting these meals?

In response to the Governor's directive, school districts throughout the state developed food distribution plans. These meals are distributed on a "grab and go" basis at food sites in every school district. However, specific dates, times, sites, and other details differ for each school district. The [NM Out-of-School-Time Network](#) is keeping an updated list of [pick-up sites, day, times, and details](#). Some school districts are opting to deliver food to students along established bus

routes. The page also has links to Roadrunner Food Bank [special distribution sites](#) and to [Presbyterian Free Healthy Meals for Kids](#).

[Click Here for Food Pick-Up Sites](#)

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## Out-of-School Time Programs are Taking Care of Kids

Many out-of-school time programs have been forced to cancel programming for the duration of the emergency closures. But this doesn't mean that these organizations are sitting on the sidelines. Some are applying to serve as emergency childcare centers, providing childcare for children of essential workers. For more information, click [here](#).

Other out-of-school time programs are working with their school districts to add pick-up food sites for families. [Moving Arts Española](#), an out-of-school time program, was forced to close its programming for the remainder of the Spring semester. Roger Montoya, Moving Art's Artistic Director, quickly organized the Northern New Mexico Emergency Food Network, which includes nine other organizations focused on providing food and necessities to those in need. The purpose of the network is to work together in serving the community while reducing overlap and waste of resources. The organization is partnering with the Española Public Schools to be a curbside pick-up site for breakfast and lunch. Breakfast can be picked up at 8:00 am and lunch by noon, Monday- Friday. Also, Moving Arts is serving hot vegetarian suppers. These are also for pickup only and can be picked up at Moving Arts Espanola between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm Monday- Friday.

[Search for Out-of-School Programs](#)

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## Resources for Families

Families aren't just learning how to home school. Many are also holding down jobs, either working in or outside the home; figuring out how to safely take care of essential activities like shopping or keeping up with health care, including [vaccinations](#), paying the bills; dealing with frustrations and fears. [Ngage New Mexico](#), home of the Doña Ana County, prenatal to career, SUCCESS Partnership education initiative, is offering a series of webinars for caregivers in English and Spanish. Register to watch them on-demand.

Apoyando a los Niños Durante la Pandemia del Virus Corona. [Register](#)  
Creating Effective Home Learning Environments [Register](#)

[Ngage New Mexico](#)

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## A Tip for Parents and Families

Parents and families are the first and most important teachers in children's lives. While partnerships with school personnel and staff are vital resources for families and communities, those who are parenting children during this pandemic and trying to juggle many other responsibilities are feeling stressed. It's perhaps time to remind ourselves that we serve our children, ourselves and our families best by building from family's strengths. The catch: there's nothing like a crisis to make it hard to see strengths.

Positive Parenting is an approach to parenting that focuses on relationships rather than challenging behaviors. It is normal during this time for children of all ages to revisit developmental milestones that you thought they'd outgrown. This is a natural and normal response to stress. If you have questions or concerns about

your child's behaviors and how best to support their social and emotional health, please contact your pediatrician or family physician. The American Academy of Pediatrics has also published helpful tips. Many of these may affirm what you're already doing, so keep at it! You might also find some new and helpful ideas. Be gentle with yourself and your children. These are trying times. Lilly Irvin-Vitela, President and Executive Director provided the parent and family tips. Connect with Lilly at [lilly@nmfirst.org](mailto:lilly@nmfirst.org).

[More Helpful Tips](#)



Democracy at its best!

## May Deadlines Approach!

### Update Voter Registration

If you are planning to vote in the 2020 Primary Election, you must be registered with a major political party (Democratic, Republican) before **May 5, 2020**. [Update your voter registration today in just a few minutes.](#)

### Stay Home, Vote Absentee!

Absentee voting begins on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, for the Primary Election. **The deadline to request an absentee ballot is May 28.** Go to NMVote, which contains the [absentee ballot portal](#).

[Update Registration & Vote Absentee](#)

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## Did you complete the census?

Every person in New Mexico needs to get counted to protect federal funding for healthcare, schools, roads, education, and more! Find out what New Mexico is doing to ensure a full count. And make sure you and your family are counted! **It's easy. It's online. It's important!**

[Complete the Census](#)

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## It is important to stay engaged. Help us.

At this time, it's more important than ever that we stay engaged with each other and have access to accurate information. Each week we share news and offer a tip or two, and we invite you to share your tips with us! We would love to hear how your community is building connections and wellness! Email us at [info@nmfirst.org](mailto:info@nmfirst.org) or call us at 505-225-2140.



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