



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

Central NY schools facing milk carton shortage, scramble for solutions

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School districts in Central New York are scrambling for solutions amid a nationwide shortage of milk carton material.

The Liverpool Central School District sent a message to parents Tuesday informing them that its milk vendor is being impacted by a shortage of materials needed to produce one pint milk cartons. Schools could run out of individual milk cartons as early as this week and the shortage could last several months.

Liverpool school officials said its milk vendor would instead provide half gallon containers of milk, and serve it in disposable cups with lids to students at each meal. Chocolate milk will not be available once one pint cartons run out.

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Guidance released Tuesday by the NYSED said schools could pour milk from larger containers into individual cups; offer one type of milk instead of a variety; offer an alternate

form of fluid milk such as low-fat or fat-free lactose-free milk or reduced-lactose fluid milk; or, as a last resort, not offer fluid milk altogether. Juice cannot be offered in place of the milk component, as school breakfast and lunch meals are required to have no more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings in the form of juice.

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“I thank and commend the State Education Department for taking swift action to support students and ease the burden many districts are facing due to a nationwide shortage of small milk cartons,” New York State Sen. John Mannion said in a statement Tuesday. “There’s a reason that milk has been a staple in school cafeterias for generations – it’s healthy, nutritious, and helps kids grow and learn. I’m monitoring this situation closely and if the shortage persists, I’ll work closely with partners across government, vendors, and our local farmers to make sure milk continues to be served without interruption in our schools.”