



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PIZZA HUT OFFERS FREE PIZZAS AND GRANTS TO LOCAL HAWAII EDUCATORS  
SERVING STUDENTS IN NEED**

*Pizza Hut initiative supplements local school efforts to maintain critical meal services and help educators distribute educational resources to their students amidst COVID-19 school closures*

**HONOLULU (April 15, 2020)** – In a matter of days, COVID-19 closed schools in Hawaii, denying students access to everyday necessities - meal services, internet, books and more. To meet the urgent needs of students who rely on school for food and educational resources, Pizza Hut has announced it is bringing the Read & Feed Program to Hawaii, donating Personal Pan Pizza® certificates and distributing grants to local educators through its nonprofit partner, First Book.

Starting around April 22, every order from First Book (up to 10,000) will include 25 Pizza Hut Personal Pan Pizza® certificates. Local Hawaii First Book-eligible teachers can order books or other educational resources and distribute them – along with the Personal Pan Pizza certificates – among students where essential services are received.

“We’re proud to work alongside First Book to help support our local educators, students and families as we all navigate the challenges of school closures during this time,” said Kevin Kurihara, President and CEO, TD Food Group, Inc.

Area educators serving students in need who are interested in accessing these resources can visit [FirstBook.org](https://www.firstbook.org) for more information.

“For millions of students, school is one of the only places to receive reliable meals and access to books. By equipping the amazing educators serving these students with grants and food to distribute, we’re doubling down on our 35-year commitment to supporting childhood literacy and helping children receive meals they need during this crisis,” said George Felix, Chief Marketing Officer, Pizza Hut. “Help us spread the word by letting educators in your own circles know of these available grants at [FirstBook.org](https://www.firstbook.org), so we can continue to help as many students as possible.”

“This crisis exacerbates the inequities that already exist. Children in affluent schools can stay at home and continue their schoolwork via online curriculum and home libraries -- but children from low-income families rely on school for meals – and they don’t have access to the internet or books in their homes. They need our help now,” said Kyle Zimmer, President, CEO and Co-founder of First Book. “We are so grateful to Pizza Hut for stepping up and working with us to make a difference for the kids who need us most right now. The Read & Feed Program will help keep so many children in need from falling behind at this unprecedented time. This is what corporate leadership looks like.”

The Read & Feed Program is the latest literacy-based initiative from Pizza Hut, which has nurtured a love of reading since 1984 through the BOOK IT! Program. BOOK IT! is the largest and longest-running corporate supported reading program and has inspired 1-in-5 Americans along the way. In 2016, Pizza Hut expanded its commitment to literacy when it launched [Pizza Hut: The Literacy Project](https://www.pizzahut.com/literacy), a global commitment to impact 100 million lives by enabling access to books and educational resources,



empowering teachers and inspiring readers. To achieve this, Pizza Hut raises money on behalf of its nonprofit partner First Book, who provides grants to teachers to purchase books and educational resources for their students and classrooms.

### **What else is Pizza Hut doing to help communities during COVID-19?**

In addition to supporting students and educators, Pizza Hut has instituted a number of new innovations to prioritize the safety of its employees and customers, including:

- Offering new options like contactless delivery and pickup methods
- Adopting a hands-free experience (meaning once the pizza leaves Pizza Hut's 400+ degree oven, it slides hands-free into the box and heads straight to the customer's home)

Additionally, as COVID-19-related unemployment claims increase locally and across the country, Pizza Hut and its franchisees recently announced they're hiring, with more than 30,000 open permanent positions currently available nationwide.

### **About TD Food Group, Inc.**

TD Food Group, Inc., a subsidiary of Restaurant Brands Hawaii Ltd., operates 62 Pizza Hut and Taco Bell restaurants throughout the Hawaiian Islands and 13 Pizza Hut and Taco Bell restaurants in Guam and Saipan.

### **About First Book**

Founded in Washington, D.C., in 1992 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit social enterprise, First Book is a leader in the educational equity field. Over its 27-year history, First Book has distributed more than 185 million books and educational resources, with a value of more than \$1.5 billion. First Book believes education offers children in need the best path out of poverty. First Book breaks down barriers to quality education by providing its network of more than 450,000 registered teachers, librarians, after school program leaders, and others serving children in need with millions of free and affordable new, high-quality books, educational resources, and basic needs items through the award-winning First Book Marketplace nonprofit eCommerce site. The First Book Network comprises the largest and fastest-growing community of formal and informal educators serving children in need.

First Book also expands the breadth and depth of the education field through a family of social enterprises, including First Book Research & Insights, its proprietary research initiative, and the First Book Accelerator, which brings best-in-class research to the classroom via relevant, usable educator resources. First Book Impact Funds target support to areas of particular need, such as rural communities or increasing diversity in children's books.

For more information, visit [firstbook.org](https://www.firstbook.org) or follow the latest news on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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