

Monthly Update



School Nutrition Programs

October 3, 2024

Distributed to School Nutrition Program Authorized Representatives and Food Service Directors via Listserv and posted at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, SNP Monthly Updates.

October Town Hall

The October Town Hall will provide important reminders, clarifications and updates for SNP and CACFP. Topics include Farm to Plate Month updates, recognition of Kansans Can Award winners, grant opportunities and SNP Verification reminders. Join the meeting on October 10 at 2 pm using the following link: <https://ksde.zoom.us/j/87204779621?pwd=NEhrcHloRjBobGtOZTJEWfJtR0tUQT09> Meeting ID: 872 0477 9621. Passcode: 746337

Fiscal Year 2024 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants

Kansas has received an allocation of \$103,682 to competitively award equipment assistance grants to eligible Sponsors participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) including those operating the Seamless Summer Option (SSO). This year, priority does not have to be given to high need schools where 50% or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Priority will be given to those schools who have not received a previous NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant. These funds will allow Sponsors who apply and are awarded equipment assistance grants to purchase equipment to improve nutritional quality of school meals, safety of food served, increase efficiency of procurement, food storage and service, support expanded participation in the NSLP, ability to use local foods, strategies for adopting lunchroom changes that provide more convenience and appeal to the student population such as Grab and Go or Kiosks and/or to support the establishment, maintenance or expansion of the School Breakfast Program through innovative service models. The Kansas grant application is available at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, SNP What's New. Applications are due by close of business on November 15, 2024. Contact Eryn Davis at edavis@ksde.org with questions. Eryn is available to review applications to make sure they are complete prior to the deadline.

Excess Cash Balance – Food Service Fund

To maintain the nonprofit status of the Food Service Fund, the fund balance or net cash resources of the fund should not exceed three (3) months' average expenditures. If the balance exceeds this threshold, the sponsor must take steps to reduce the balance or have an acceptable plan for using surplus revenues. **KSDE notified Sponsors who have exceeded the threshold to develop a plan.** The plan must be reviewed and approved by KSDE. Only allowable expenses to the Food Service Fund are approvable. Due to the uncertainty of costs and participation in school meal programs for SY 2024-25, Sponsors that have excess cash balances will be allowed to indicate that higher food and labor costs and uncertain participation may impact the food service fund and can be used as acceptable reasoning on a spend down plan.

Healthier Kansas Menus Revisions

The CNW team will soon begin work on revising the Healthier Kansas Menus to incorporate recipes using local foods and to comply with the updated nutrition standards. CNW would like to hear from Kansas Sponsors! To provide valuable input please complete the short survey by October 17th: https://ksde.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3CcbHA8en7Y0NFk



Verification

Verification is confirmation of eligibility for reduced price and free meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The following sponsors do not complete verification:

- Sponsors participating in ONLY the Special Milk Program
- Residential Child Care Institutions that do not also operate a day school
- Sponsors that are participating district-wide in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

All other sponsors must select and verify eligibility for a sample of applications approved for benefits. One person should coordinate all verification activities for the sponsor. Important deadlines for the verification process are:

- October 1 – Count applications and students approved for reduced price and free meals. Applications and students that are in “carry-over” status on October 1 are NOT included in this count. Complete the Pre-Verification Worksheet in KN-CLAIM to determine the Sponsor’s sampling method. Once the Pre-Verification Worksheet is submitted, go into the Post-Verification Results screen to see the number and type of applications that must be verified. Verify ONLY the number required unless verified “for cause”.
- October 31 – Update counts of students approved for reduced price and free meals on the Pre-Verification Worksheet in KN-CLAIM. Do NOT update number of applications. CEP sponsors only: Enter the number of students directly certified for Food Assistance (FA) as of 10/31/2024. This total should be the same as row 1a. Enter the total for CEP sites and for non-CEP sites. If sponsor is 100% CEP, put a zero for non-CEP sites.
- November 15 – Complete all verification activities. This deadline is the same whether it falls on a weekday or weekend.
- December 15 – Complete reporting of Post-Verification Results in KN-CLAIM.

To navigate to the Verification screens in KN-CLAIM, select School Nutrition Programs, Program Year 2025 and then click on the “Forms” tab on the Sponsor Summary page. On the same line as “Pre-Verification Worksheet” click the <Add> button which can be found at the right-hand side of the screen and has the image of a + sign. For step-by-step instructions, the Verification Quick Reference Guide can assist you in completing the Pre-Verification Worksheet correctly. The guide is available at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, KN-CLAIM, Quick References, School Nutrition Program Verification.

USDA requires KSDE to annually report verification data for each sponsor. The USDA report is completed using the data you provide on the Pre-Verification Worksheet and the Post-Verification Results screens in KN-CLAIM. Please make sure that the information entered is accurate, complete, and submitted on time. For instructions on the verification process and all related forms (including KSDE’s Spanish translations), go to <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, Food Service Facts, Chapter 8: Verification of Eligibility.

2024 Summer EBT – Application Deadline Extended to October 15th

The Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (Summer EBT) is a new federal nutrition program that provides grocery benefits during the summer months to families with children eligible for free or reduced price school meals. Kansas has elected to participate in Summer EBT beginning in summer 2024. For more information about Summer EBT in Kansas, go to [Summer EBT - Economic & Employment Services \(ks.gov\)](https://ks.gov). Households can contact the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) at 1-866-369-4777 for more information about eligibility benefits. **Eligible children that were not automatically issued benefits by DCF by the end of July may complete an online application up until October 15, 2024, at www.dcfapp.kees.ks.gov.**



October is Farm to Plate Month!

FY 2024 Farm to School Grant

Child Nutrition Program (CNP) Sponsors may request up to \$10,000 to support Farm to Plate initiatives that will increase the local foods served as part of Child Nutrition Program snacks and meals. Subgrants will be utilized by CNP operators to advance eligible local foods programming activities including gardening, chicken houses, raising livestock, garden towers, and more. Two funding tracks will be available: up to \$2,500 subgrant available for expansion of current farm to CNP projects, and up to \$10,000 for new projects implementing farm to CNP programming. Subgrants will be available to School Nutrition Program (SNP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors with funding priority given to those with 40% or more of program participants eligible for free or reduced priced meals. The application is available at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, Farm to Plate, What's New. Contact Barb Depew at bdepew@ksde.org with questions.

Harvest of the Month

The Harvest of the Month program is here! This month, your sponsor will receive a toolkit in the mail with promotional items for the Harvest of the Month program including:

- One 18 x 24 poster for each month
- One roll of 100 stickers for each month
- 6 sheets of static clings per month, 3 clings per sheet.

Additional resources will be available for download on the Child Nutrition & Wellness website this fall under the Farm to Plate tab. As you implement the Harvest of the Month resources, post and share using the hashtag #fuelingkskids. Make sure to complete the Harvest of the Month survey to be entered to win a tabletop blender and digital scale. Winners will be drawn in March 2025, October 2025 and March 2026. Contact Eryn Davis at edavis@ksde.org or 785-296-5060 with questions regarding Harvest of the Month.

Local Foods Culinary Training

Available on the KSDE Training Portal, this 2-hour training features Kansas products and producers, gives helpful information to how to implement Farm to Plate in Kansas Child Nutrition Programs, and provides recipes and culinary tips for incorporating the Kansas products featured in the training into local menus! Each school kitchen with a staff member completing the training is eligible to receive a culinary toolkit consisting of dough cutter, wire whisk, digital scale, and blender (1 kit per school kitchen). Instructions for completing the survey to receive the toolkit will be posted at the end of the online training. Go to <https://learning.ksde.org> to access this training.

The 6th Annual Mountain Plains Crunch Off – October 2024

Mark your calendars for the 6th annual Mountain Plains Crunch Off! Celebrate with any crunchable local product any day in October to participate in the crunch off. Crunchable local products can be found in many places – school/childcare gardens, farmer's market, or local distributors. Register your crunch at https://ksde.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6QBF0bpkiChGNSe

USDA Updates

New foods are now available in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG) Interactive Web-based Tool and Mobile App!

New yield data is available for the following, which are identified as traditional Indigenous foods in Tribal communities: Huckleberries, bison, canned steelhead trout, halibut, walleye, white perch, and whitefish. Stay tuned for additional yield data releases coming soon. Explore the FBG today!



Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheet Series

The Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheet series has been revised to reflect the changes with the Final Rule, “Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.” The Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs tip sheet series consists of seven tip sheets covering the five meal components: fruits, vegetables, meats/meat alternates, fluid milk, and grains (three separate tip sheets). The revised versions introduce the menu-planning flexibilities beginning July 1, 2024, and changes that will be implemented in the coming school years in a quick-reference format.

Access the entire tip sheet series today in English at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/crediting-tip-sheets-child-nutrition-programs> or in Spanish at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/es/tn/crediting-tip-sheets-child-nutrition-programs>. The series will be available in print at a later date!

Revised Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

The Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs has been revised to reflect the Final Rule, “*Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*” It is a must-have resource for anyone involved in planning school meals. This important resource provides examples of various grain products often served in schools and walks through the process of determining whether products are whole grain-rich, creditable as enriched, or not creditable. You may access the English version of the Whole Grain Resource at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/whole-grain-resource-national-school-lunch-and-breakfast-programs>. The Spanish-translated version is coming soon!

Fiscal Year 2025 CACFP & SFSP Area Eligibility Data Now Available!

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has announced that the 2025 Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) participant area eligibility data is now available! At the start of every fiscal year, FNS releases a special tabulation of data provided by the Census Bureau for CACFP and SFSP that establishes area eligibility in CACFP and SFSP. This data is effective as of October 1, 2024. The FNS mapping tools have also been updated to reflect the new data.

To explore the area eligibility map, click this [link](#). The data set is also available for download on FNS’ [open data site](#). To learn more about using census data for establishing area eligibility for CACFP and SFSP, please review the USDA [policy memorandum](#) from 2017.

Updated! Team Nutrition’s Serving School Meals to Preschoolers

Team Nutrition’s Serving School Meals to Preschoolers training worksheet has been updated to be consistent with the Final Rule, “*Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*” This four-page worksheet assists National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program operators in planning menus that meet the preschool meal pattern. Available for download today at fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-school-meals-preschoolers.

Annual On-site Accountability Reviews

The School Food Service On-Site Accountability Review (Form 9-G) can be accessed online at <https://cnw.ksde.org>, SNP, SNP Food Service Facts, Chapter 9. **By February 1**, Sponsors with more than one serving site must review each site approved to participate in the National School Lunch Program at least once per year and review 50% of all sites approved to participate in the School Breakfast Program once per year.



It is a best practice to rotate review of breakfast sites to ensure all sites are monitored at least every other year. Someone not involved in the daily meal accountability procedures at the site must conduct the On-Site Accountability Review. Keep completed reviews on file with school food service program documents for review or audit. Each on-site review must ensure the school's claim is based on the counting system, as reported on the site application, and yields the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced price, and paid lunches, respectively, served for each day of operation. If the review discloses problems with a school's meal counting or claiming procedures, the Sponsor must ensure that the school implements corrective action, and within 45 days of the review conduct a follow-up on-site review to determine that the corrective action resolved the problems. For Sponsors contracting with a Food Service Management Company, these reviews are required in addition to the Form 14-A FSMC Monitoring Form.

Training Opportunities

Many opportunities for learning are available for SNP Sponsors. Go to <https://cnw.ksde.org>, Training, CNW Calendar to access the class list with dates, times and Zoom links. Upcoming trainings, include:

- **Procuring Local Foods** on October 2 from 2-3 pm
- **Food Safety Basics** on October 16 from 2-5 pm
- **CACFP Administrative Review Training** on October 29 from 1-2 pm
- **Speed Scratch Strategies** on November 6 from 2-3:30 pm

Training is also offered 24/7 through the KSDE Training Portal. Create an account at <https://learning.ksde.org>. For detailed instructions on creating an account, go to <https://cnw.ksde.org>, Training. New to the portal: SNP Verification (2 hours).

Culinary Coaches – NEW Training Program!

KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness is excited to be launching a Culinary Coaches Program in SY 2025! This training opportunity allows sponsors to request in-person, hands-on culinary training conducted at their site. The sessions will be led by trained culinary coaches and will focus on developing culinary skills that will better enable child nutrition program sponsors to prepare scratch and speed scratch recipes. If interested in the culinary coaches training, please contact Holly at hsteinlage@ksde.org.

Celebrate National School Lunch Week – October 14-18, 2024

Let's get ready for #NSLW24! Created by President John F. Kennedy in 1962, National School Lunch Week (NSLW) was established to promote the importance of a healthy school lunch in a child's life and the impact it has inside and outside of the classroom. Celebrate with special menus, events, and activities, all with the goal of:

- Increasing student participation
- Spreading the message that you are serving healthy, delicious lunch at school
- Earning media coverage from local papers, TV stations and bloggers

This year's theme, **"School Lunch Pirates: Find Your Treasures"**, highlights the importance of a healthy school lunch to student's success both in and out of the classroom. SNA has created resources to help you plan your celebration available at <https://schoolnutrition.org/about-school-meals/national-school-lunch-week/>

As always, if you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact your Child Nutrition Consultant or the Topeka office.

The CNW Team



For more information, contact:

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