

School Nutrition Update

April 3-7, 2023



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Program Operations Information

Breaking News – Submit Comments on New Child Nutrition Standards Proposed Rule – Deadline extended to 5/10

On February 3, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) announced a new proposed rule, “[Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)”. The proposed rule contains new Child Nutrition regulations regarding the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program. USDA is proposing to make nutrition standards more stringent by reducing sodium, increasing whole grains, and decreasing added sugar (which will impact the ability of elementary and middle schools to offer flavored milk) among other suggested changes.

The original comment period was set for February 7-April 10, 2023. USDA just announced the deadline has been extended to May 10. Every voice matters! Submit your comments on how the proposed rule will impact your programs. The actual number of comments received makes a tremendous difference in the outcome. USDA will review and record all comments submitted. School Nutrition professionals and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the [proposed rule and related materials](#) and [submit comments](#).

Submit Comments on New CEP Proposed Regulation Change – Deadline 5/8

On March 22, USDA Secretary Vilsack announced a [proposed regulation change](#) that would give more schools the option to provide healthy school meals to all students at no cost. The proposed rule would expand access to the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) by lowering the minimum identified student percentage participation threshold from 40 percent to 25 percent, which would give states and schools greater flexibility to choose to invest non-federal funds to offer no-cost meals to all enrolled students. As a result, more students, families, and schools would have an opportunity to experience the benefits of CEP, including access to meals at no cost, eliminating unpaid meal charges, minimizing stigma, reducing paperwork for School Nutrition staff and families, and streamlining meal service operations. When all students have access to healthy school meals, meal participation tends to increase, and more children can experience nutritional benefits that fuel their learning, growth, and development.

USDA encourages all interested parties to comment on the CEP proposed rule during the 45-day comment period. Written comments on this proposed rule should be received on or before May 8, 2023 to receive consideration. Comments may be submitted in writing by one of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FNS-2022-0044-0001/comment>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Mail: Send comments to School Meals Policy Division, Food and Nutrition Service, P.O. Box 9233, Reston, VA 20195. All written comments submitted in response to this proposed rule will be included in the record and will be made available to the public. Please be advised that the substance of the comments and the identity of the individuals or entities submitting the comments will be subject to public disclosure. FNS will make the written comments publicly available on the internet via <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Add Your Summer Food Service Program Sites Early!

It feels like spring, but Destination Summer is just around the corner! As you finalize your plans and pinpoint locations for your N.C. Summer Nutrition Programs, please add the sites to your application in the School Nutrition Technology System (SNTS). Submit applications early, if possible, to avoid the stressful last-minute rush and ensure approval before your program starts. Aiming for May 5, 2023 would be helpful for the NCDPI Summer Nutrition Program Team to ensure you are summer ready.



Addressing Unique Mealtime Needs within a Multi-Tiered System of Support

Meeting a student's unique mealtime needs is a complex process often requiring specialized interprofessional evaluation, intervention, and progress monitoring. Students who require support for mealtime participation have needs that vary in type, resources required, intensity, and duration. The N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) are pleased to announce in-person professional learning opportunities this spring for **Addressing Mealtime Needs within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**. Dates and locations are listed below. Using MTSS as an organizing framework, this full-day course will equip school leaders in establishing and sustaining individualized programming while adhering to multiple requirements under USDA, IDEA, Section 504, state law, and local policies. The session will investigate best practices, relevant statute and policies, and existing state and local resources for supporting students with unique mealtime participation needs and provide teams with planning time.

- April 17, 2023 , 9 am-4 pm, Four Points by Sheraton Downtown, Asheville
- April 26, 2023, 9 am-4 pm, Jarrell Lecture Hall, Jackson Library, UNC Greensboro, Greensboro
- May 5, 2023, 9 am-4 pm, New Bern Riverfront Convention Center, New Bern

Participants only need to attend one of these trainings. Interprofessional teams are encouraged to attend and will be given priority during registration. Only ONE representative from each discipline per public school unit (PSU) or local education agency (LEA/Charter) should register to attend. School teams addressing mealtime needs include:

- School Nutrition Administrators
- School/District Administrators (e.g. 504 Coordinators, School Principals, Exceptional Children Directors)
- School Nurses
- Occupational Therapy Practitioners
- Speech Language Pathologists
- Exceptional Children/General Education Teachers
- Other related service providers/educators

See the training [flyer](#) for a full session description. Please [register](#) in advance to attend the training. Contact your regional consultant with any questions.

Take a Break from the SN Update

Many public school units are scheduled for spring break over the next couple of weeks. Given this, the School Nutrition Update e-letter will take a break the week of April 10-14.

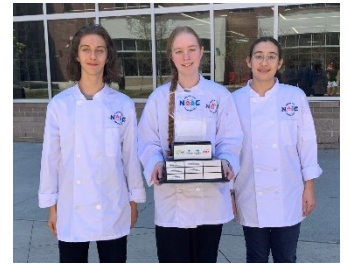
School Nutrition Spotlight

Celebrating N.C. Jr. Chef Competition Results!

Eight high school finalist teams competed in the annual North Carolina Jr. Chef cook-off this month to create unique school lunch entrée recipes. The “Waffle House” team from Apex High with Wake County Public Schools won first place in the 2023 North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition. Their Sweetpotato Waffle with Maple Barbecue Chicken and Apple Slaw won top honors and a silver medal.



The Apex High team worked to create a healthier version of fried chicken and waffles, a student favorite. They made sweet and savory waffles from scratch incorporating sweetpotatoes and chives. Baked maple-barbecue glazed chicken and a fresh slaw with cabbage, apples, and carrots accompanied the waffles. The recipe featured North Carolina-grown sweetpotatoes, cabbage, apples, chicken, and milk.



The “NHS Culinary” team from Northern High with Durham Public Schools won second place and a silver medal for their Honey Garlic Glazed Chicken on Sweet Potato Steamed Buns, with Kale and Apple Salad. The “Ridgerunners” team from Swain County High won third place and a silver medal for their Blueberry Chicken Salad Wrap.

All the teams showcased their skills in the culinary competition. The Ashe County High “Huskies” team (Kickin’ Chicken with Rice), Franklin High “Panthers” team from Macon County Schools (Smoky Mountain Cajun Pizza), Brevard High “Culinary Devils” team from Transylvania County Schools (Thai Pineapple Fried Rice with Chicken), and Havelock High “HHS Jr. Chef” team from Craven County Schools (Rainbow Veggie Wraps) also received silver medals. The Weaver Academy “Paje” team from Guilford County Schools (Oven Baked Chicken Sandwich) received a bronze medal. The finalist teams were recognized, and the competition results were announced during a virtual awards ceremony on March 30. The teams did an outstanding job taking on the challenge of creating a school lunch entrée recipe that adheres to National School Lunch Program regulations, features at least two North Carolina-grown ingredients and one USDA Foods item, and appeals to students. [Learn more.](#) Congratulations to all the teams!

Follow/Like Us on Social Media

Did you know you could find the NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition on social media? Follow or like our pages - @NCSchoolMeals and @Ray4NCKids on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Share Your School Nutrition Photos

The NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition wants to highlight the appealing, wholesome, quality meals our School Nutrition Programs across the state offer to students each day. Share your beautiful photos of serving lines and complete school breakfast or school lunch meals with us. Please send to Tracey Bates, NCDPI School Nutrition Promotion Specialist, at tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov. Make sure to include the



Johnston County Schools

school and district info so we can aim to credit the source. Be on the lookout for photos of school meals from across the state on social media.

Send in Articles or Topics of Interest for the School Nutrition Update E-letter

If you have a resource, grant, job opportunity, continuing education event, award announcement, shout out or other news item for the School Nutrition Update, please send a brief article (250 words or less) to Tracey Bates, tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov, by 12 pm on the Wednesday prior to when the SN Update is sent out the following week. Please include “**SN Update**” in the email subject line. If there are topics of interest you would also like to see included, please share as well.

Grant Opportunity

Work with Wake County Child Nutrition – Two Open Positions

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) is seeking applicants for two open positions with Child Nutrition Services (CNS). The Administrator for Innovation and Program Development works under the direction of the Director of Innovation and Program Development and assists with food and supply decisions, creates the menus and oversees meal pattern compliance for WCPSS, works directly with vendors, and works to help implement new innovations and visions within the Child Nutrition Department. To view the complete job description and apply, visit the [WCPSS Job Board](#).

The Area Supervisor is responsible for supervising food service operations within a geographical area by monitoring operations to ensure daily compliance with local, state, and federal policies, regulations, and best practices for sanitation, safety, financial/resource management, and general program operations. Additionally, this individual provides internal operations support by managing specialized functions within CNS, such as menu planning, product sourcing/evaluation, technology support, equipment evaluation/purchases, training, grants, dietary accommodations, marketing or other functions to address the evolving needs of CNS. To view the complete job description and apply, visit the [WCPSS Job Board](#).

Grant Opportunity

Going Local Grant – Due 4/15

The North Carolina Farm Bureau is happy to provide agricultural outreach grants to North Carolina teachers through the Ag in the Classroom Going Local program. These grants value up to \$500. Going Local Grants help educators provide Pre-K through collegiate level students with valuable, real-world education and experiences directly related to the agricultural industry and the N.C. Standard Course of Study. Teachers practicing in private and public North Carolina schools, colleges, and universities are encouraged to apply. The deadline to submit an application is April 15, 2023. [Learn more and apply.](#)

Growing Minds Grant – Due 15th of Each Month Through 4/15

The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), Growing Minds program wants to help fund your farm to school project in Western North Carolina! This mini-grant program connects K-12 schools throughout the eighteen westernmost counties of North Carolina with local agriculture and gives children positive

experiences with healthy local foods through the four components of farm to school: farm field trips, local food cooking and taste tests, school gardens, and local food served in school cafeterias. Farm to school activity mini-grants will be provided up to \$1,000. Mini-grant applications are due every month on the 15th through April 15, 2023 and will be awarded by the 30th of each month! [Learn more and apply.](#)

Apply for FY 2023 Team Nutrition Grant – Due 5/22

A request for applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Team Nutrition Grant Supporting Nutrition Education for School-Aged Children is now available. The USDA, Food and Nutrition Service expects to award approximately \$10 million in total funding (up to \$1,000,000 per State Agency or School Food Authority (SFA) through a competitive award process for use over a three-year grant period). Should additional funds become available, USDA may increase the grant ceiling and/or award more grants.

The FY 2023 Team Nutrition Grant Supporting Nutrition Education for School-Aged Children will support State Agencies and SFAs in implementing the adoption of healthy eating patterns by school-aged children (grades pre-K through 12) and their families through the coordination and implementation of [MyPlate nutrition education](#) connected to the nutritious meals and snacks offered through USDA Child Nutrition Programs. State Agency and SFA grantees will provide direct nutrition education to students, parents/caregivers, and other school stakeholders, and build capacity for revitalizing local school wellness policies, to improve the consumption of nutritious foods and beverages offered through USDA Child Nutrition Programs.

Full grant applications are due via [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59 pm ET on May 22, 2023. Grant information is available on the USDA [website](#). USDA will host an informational webinar on April 5 at 3 pm ET. [Register](#) in advance to participate. For questions regarding applications, please contact the Grant Officer, Anna Arrowsmith, anna.arrowsmith@usda.gov.

Continuing Education

Utilizing USDA Foods – 4/12, 3 pm ET

Join the School Nutrition Association (SNA) for a Best of School Nutrition Industry Conference (SNIC) 2023 webinar on April 12 at 3 pm ET to explore why working with USDA Foods is an important part of running a fiscally sound operation. Along with useful USDA reimbursement and entitlement information, your peers will act out common, but nuanced case studies to bring this session and important subject to life! Listen to a few difficult to navigate scenarios and engage in audience discussion through the chat feature. [Learn more and register.](#)

Exchange Ideas: Menu Ideation – 4/13, 2 pm ET

Join School Nutrition Association (SNA) staff to discuss topics from the latest issue of School Nutrition (SN) Magazine in their “Virtual Magazine Club”! This discussion will revolve around Menu Ideation featuring Chef Monica Coulter, Chef Rebecca Polson, and Chef Brittany Jones. Hosted in Zoom, this will be facilitated discussions and NOT like a traditional webinar. Please come and be a part of this ideas exchange. [Learn more and register.](#)

Access Virtual Training Opportunities

The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) has compiled [resources to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus](#). Online food safety/HACCP training is available on the NCDPI, School Nutrition [website](#) and the ICN [website](#). Additional continuing education resources are available on the School Nutrition [website](#) from NCDPI, ICN, the School Nutrition Association and other agencies and organizations. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics offers [continuing professional education resources](#) for Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists (RDNs) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTRs).

Questions

If you have any questions regarding these updates, please reach out to your [regional consultants](#).

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained [online](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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