

School Nutrition Update

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Program Operations Information

Second Round of CARES Act Fund Guidance

A second round of CARES Act Fund guidance for School Nutrition (PRC-125) was sent to School Nutrition administrators on August 12th. Please review the guidance with your Superintendent and Finance Officer and begin to apply it to your district's unique situation. The decision tree can assist you in considering the possible allowable uses of these funds in the manner that best supports your School Nutrition Program. Questions can be directed to Janet Johnson, janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov, or Dr. Lynn Harvey, lynn.harvey@dpi.nc.gov. The N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), School Nutrition will seek answers from the Office of State Budget and Management and the N.C. Pandemic Recovery Office.

Transportation of Meals under Plans B or C upon Opening of Schools

In order to utilize yellow buses and transportation funds to operate yellow buses to transport meals when schools open for the 2020-21 school year, three conditions are required:

- Continuation of the Governor's Emergency Declaration that activates the General Statute 115C-242(6) for emergency use of yellow school buses (NOTE: Executive Order 116 declared the State of Emergency and authorizes the use of yellow school buses for emergency purposes until it is rescinded by the Governor.),
- Approval of each local Board of Education for emergency use, and
- Approval of Transportation funds must be available for this purpose. **Public school units (PSUs) may use CARES Act Funds (PRC-125 or PRC-163) if these funds are still available to the district.** (Note: the approval to have flexibility in the use of Pupil Transportation funds (PRC-056) has not been obtained; this item is still pending. A request has been made to the Office of the Governor to extend the budget flexibility for the use of transportation funds (PRC-056) to deliver meals to students as school reopens. We will inform you as soon as we receive a response.)

If you have questions regarding the use of yellow buses or transportation funds, please reach out to your Zone teams.

Infection Control and PPE Guidance

The [Strong Schools NC Infection Control and PPE Guidance \(K-12\)](#) from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has recently been updated. In addition, NCDHHS has issued Instructions on How to Adjust Cloth Face Coverings Distributed to K-12 Students, Teachers and Staff in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). Please share these resources with your schools.



Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) Recap

The North Carolina Food Code requires FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS to have a PERSON IN CHARGE (PIC), who is a Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) on site at all times the establishment is in operation. To verify the PIC has an approved CFPM certification as specified in Paragraphs 2-102.12(A) and Section 2-102.20 of the N.C. Food Code Manual, the PIC must have successfully passed an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited CFPM examination. During COVID-19, there will be no points deducted during an inspection for an expired certificate although the expiration will be noted on the inspection form. This will allow additional time for certificate renewal.

The Safe Plates for Food Managers course now uses the Prometrics, Inc. exam and the ServSafe® course uses the exam from the National Restaurant Association. Several other organizations offer ANSI accredited exams which will provide the certification required by the Food Code. It is important to remember it is successful passing of the EXAM not participation in a COURSE which provides the certification. Below is a listing of currently approved exams and some of these organizations offer online proctoring and/or online course instruction. It is not a requirement to participate in a course to take an exam although doing so may increase successful exam scores.

- [360training.com, Inc.](#) (Learn2Serve® Food Protection Manager Certification Program)
- [AboveTraining/StateFoodSafety.com](#) (Certified Food Protection Manager Exam)
- [National Registry of Food Safety Professionals](#) (Food Protection Manager Certification Program, International Certified Food Safety Manager)
- [National Restaurant Association](#) (ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification Program)
- [Prometrics, Inc.](#) (Food Protection Manager Certification Program)
- [The Always Food Safe Company, LLC](#) (Food Protection Manager Certification Program)

N.C. State University Extension has plans to convert the Safe Plates for Food Managers course to an online format with remote proctoring for the Prometrics, Inc. exam in fall 2020. We will provide details for this option when the course is launched. For additional information or questions, please contact Susan Thompson, susan.thompson@dpi.nc.gov.

Safe Cooling and Packaging of Frozen Meals

Some schools may be preparing and packaging frozen items and meals for pick up or delivery during the pandemic. The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services and N.C. State University Extension reminds us to cook and then fully cool any items prepared at school before sealing or wrapping. You may portion the food while hot but sealing or wrapping the food while hot may lead to a reduced oxygen

environment and allow the growth of harmful bacteria. Please work with your local health department on procedures for frozen meals and instructions for families. You can also reach out to your Zone School Nutrition Specialist or Susan Thompson, susan.thompson@dpi.nc.gov.

Nutrition Education & Promotion

Tips to Increase School Meal Participation

Whether your local education agency starts school with in-person learning, remote instruction or a combination, here are some strategies to increase school breakfast and lunch participation:

- Keep menu planning fun and interesting.
- Utilize scratch or speed-scratch recipes. The [N.C. K-12 Culinary Institute](#) offers a wealth of recipes.
- Incorporate familiar, student favorites, perhaps with a new twist.
- Factor in age/grade groups, cultural backgrounds, and the unique needs of students.
- Feature locally or regionally sourced foods. Source from [USDA Foods](#), [DoD Fresh](#), and the [N.C. Farm to School Program](#) (N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services) or local distributors, producers, or co-ops. USDA maintains a searchable [database of GAP-Certified Farms](#).
- Survey students regarding new recipes or menu items.
- Consider occasionally offering grain-based dessert options with meals as a surprise for students.
- Create menus for the different meal service delivery options. Sample menus are available in the Downloads section of the School Nutrition Technology System.
- Share school menus in advance. Create excitement around menus with appealing names and descriptions.
- Use clear communication and instructions for families.
- Ensure students, families and staff know how to access the menus and school meals.
- Allow pre-ordering of meals. Point of sale meal systems may offer a pre-order feature. A variety of form applications are available online, i.e., [Choosi](#), [Google Forms](#), [JotForm](#), [Microsoft Forms](#), [Remind](#), etc. The option could also be provided for families to call in orders or complete a paper form, scan or photograph it, and email it to the School Nutrition office.
- Offer times and locations for meal pick-up that are convenient for families. Explore longer windows of time and/or morning, afternoon and evening options for meal pick-up. Allowing meal pick-up from any operating school or pick up of multiple meals at one time may also be helpful.
- Aim to streamline the process for meal pick-up. Families could use placards for their car dashboard or tickets/cards that help to easily identify their students and the number/type of meals they need to pick up. Use signs directing families to stay in their cars and pop the trunk or roll down a rear window for staff to place meals in the vehicle. Cash apps can help facilitate contactless pick-up.
- Think outside the box and engage with local stakeholders for meal delivery transportation options.

Some resources are below that may be helpful to your School Nutrition Program:

- [N.C. K-12 Culinary Institute, NCDPI, School Nutrition](#)
- [Dining Guide for Meals in the Classroom, School Nutrition Association](#)
- [Food, Fun and Creativity in the Time of COVID-19, School Nutrition Association Magazine](#)
- [Grab n' Go/Curbside Breakfast and Lunch Ideas, PISD, Texas](#)

- [Transitional Menu Tool Fall 2020, Texas Department of Agriculture](#)
 - [Seamless Summer Option – Providing Multiple Meals at a Time, USDA](#)
 - [Back to School Meal Service Toolkit, No Kid Hungry](#)
 - [Cafeteria Layouts for Physical Distancing, Fall Reopening Checklist, Grab and Go Lunch Resources, Florida Department of Agriculture](#)
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Connect and Promote through Social Media

We would love to highlight your efforts to provide nutritious meals and nutrition education to children. Remember to tag and follow us on social media (@Ray4NCKids and @NCSchoolMeals) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Continuing Education

Technical Assistance Time Outs

NCDPI, School Nutrition will be offering a series of Technical Assistance Time Outs. These short, recorded webinars will provide clarification, reminders, and best practices to help your Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) operate safely, effectively, and in compliance. Links to all the Technical Assistance Time Outs will be emailed and posted to the Downloads section of the School Nutrition Technology System.

Training Series – Racial Equity in Farm to School

The Farm to School Coalition of NC and We Are together are hosting a free training series on Racial Equity in Farm to School. The remaining webinars in the series are scheduled for 3-4:30 pm ET on August 18 and September 1. Find out more and register from the [F2SCNC website](#).

Webinars – Produce Safety University

As a supplement to the 2020 Produce Safety University Program, the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service Office of Food Safety, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and Chef Cyndie Story, PhD, RDN, CC, of Culinary Solutions, LLC have developed a webinar series for School Nutrition professionals addressing the most popular Produce Safety University topics. Each webinar is an individual learning opportunity with separate registration for each. All webinars begin at 2 pm CST every Tuesday in August.

- [Register](#) for **Good Agricultural and Good Manufacturing/Handling Practices for Fresh and Fresh Cut Produce** - August 18
 - [Register](#) for **The Produce Lab: Quality, Condition, and Safe Handling and Preparation** - August 25
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Webinar - Connecting Children with Local Foods and Farmers through Summer Meal Programs

In this webinar on August 20 at 11 am ET, hosted by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), join summer meal experts who will share best practices and lessons learned from their experience piloting their own “Farm to Summer” initiatives during the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and learn about IATP’s report documenting the opportunities and challenges of Farm to Summer! [Register here](#).

Safe Plates for School Nutrition Staff Online Course Now Available

Safe Plates for School Nutrition Staff, from NCDPI, School Nutrition and N.C. State University Extension, is a 6 module course for school staff who need food safety instruction and do not need to take the ANSI accredited Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) exam for a Person in Charge (PIC). It will provide 4 hours of professional development. There are 4 additional modules in the course which can be completed for a total of 8 hours of instruction. This course has been approved by the School Nutrition Association (SNA) for food safety core course approval for their certification program. Completing the entire 8 hours of instruction will provide the required credit for the core course in food safety if needed. The course is available from the [NCSU Moodle site](#). On the Moodle site, search Safe Plates for School Nutrition. Click on the course title to be taken to a log in page. If you have completed another Moodle course, log in with your username and password. If you are new to Moodle, you will need to create an account.

COVID-19 Management for School Nutrition Online Course Now Available

[Count on Me](#) is an educational program developed by N.C. State University (NCSU) Extension, NCDHHS, Visit NC, and N.C. Food and Lodging to assist restaurants with their reopening plans earlier this summer. NCSU Extension has now adapted this information to incorporate the NCDHHS school guidance for reopening and the [COVID-19 Management for School Nutrition course](#) is now active. From the link, click on the course name. You will be directed to a log in page. If you have completed another Moodle course, log in with your username and password. If you are new to Moodle, you will need to create an account. It takes about 30 minutes to complete the course and provides a professional development certificate.

Available Virtual Training Opportunities from ICN, SNA and NCDPI

The Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) has compiled videos, fact sheets, posters and other [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 [COVID-19 professional resources](#) for Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists (RDNs) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTRs), and [continuing professional education resources](#). Document all continuing education in which your staff participates.

Grants

A variety of grants are available to assist with COVID-19 response. See below for more info:

- [Action for Healthy Kids – Emergency Meal Distribution Equipment Grants](#)
- [Assistance for Church Food Programming Affected by COVID-19](#) (Please reach out to Michelle Osborne at michelle@rafiusa.org or 919-704-6920 with any questions.)
- [Farm to School COVID-19 Related Funding](#)
- [Grant Station List of COVID-19 Related Funding for Nonprofits](#)

- The Dairy Alliance Mini-Grants - Interested School Nutrition directors should contact Health and Wellness Program Manager Cami Lewis at clewis@thedairyalliance.org or 678-822-2868.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding these updates, please reach out to your regional consultants. Contact information for your Zone teams can be found [here](#). Contact information for the Summer Nutrition Program Regional Consultants can be found [here](#).

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- (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) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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