

# School Nutrition Update

February 20-24, 2023



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- Access Virtual Training Resources

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## Program Operations Information

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### *Plan to Attend Upcoming Policy Updates*

After a hiatus, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), Office of School Nutrition will again be hosting Policy Updates during the week of February 27, 2023. These full day workshops are for all School Nutrition administrators. Registration begins at 8:30 am, with the session beginning at 9:00 am and concluding at 3:30 pm. Six hours of continuing education hours will be available for credit. Below are the dates and locations for each of the Policy Updates. Each Policy Update will present the same content.

In the workshop, participants will gain a deeper understanding of federal and state regulations, policies, and guidance related to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, School Nutrition Programs. Participants will learn about recent nutrition and operational updates and how they will impact the programs they operate. Participants will evaluate procedures to improve operations for the students they serve. The workshops will also provide opportunities for group discussion to share knowledge, resources, and strategies for success.

Your Zone Consultants will be sending the registration links so please be on the lookout for the email and register. We look forward to seeing you!

Zone	Dates	Location
1	February 28, 2023	Four Points by Sheraton (22 Woodfin St., Asheville)
2	March 2, 2023	Bermuda Run Country Club (324 Bermuda Run Dr., Bermuda Run)
3	February 28, 2023	Hickory Metro Convention Center (1960 13 <sup>th</sup> Ave Dr. SE #5186, Hickory)
4	February 28 & March 1, 2023	McKimmon Center (1101 Gorman St., Raleigh)
5	February 28, 2023	Whispering Pines Country Club (2 Clubhouse Blvd., Whispering Pines)
6	March 1, 2023	Williamston Telecenter (415 East Boulevard, Williamston)
7	March 2, 2023	New Bern Riverfront Convention Center (203 S. Front St., New Bern)

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### *Learn About and Comment on New Child Nutrition Proposed Rule – 2/21 and 3/1*

On February 3, the 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](#)". Learn more about the proposed rule:

- USDA will host a webinar for School Nutrition Program staff on February 21 at 2 pm ET regarding the proposed meal pattern changes. In order to participate in the webinar, SFAs should [register](#) in advance.
- USDA will host a webinar for State Agencies and Program Sponsors/Operators on proposed changes to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) on March 1 at 2:30 pm ET. In order to participate in the webinar, State Agencies and Sponsors should [register](#) in advance.

All proposed rule webinars will be offered with closed captioning. Participants who require a different accessibility tool to participate should reach out to Sheila Kopczynski, [sheila.kopczynski@usda.gov](mailto:sheila.kopczynski@usda.gov), for assistance as soon as possible.

The standards are available for public comment for 60 days from February 7 through April 10, 2023. School Nutrition professionals and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the proposed rule and related materials and submit comments. See links below to resources available related to the proposed rule.

- Webpage: [Proposed Updates to the School Nutrition Standards](#)
- Virtual Discussion hosted by Secretary Vilsack: [USDA Conversation on Healthier School Meals](#)
- Media Toolkit: [School Nutrition Standards Media Toolkit](#)
- Infographic: [Major Provisions for Proposed School Meal Standards](#)
- Infographic: [Proposed Implementation Timeline for Updating School Meal Standards](#)
- Comparison Chart: [Current and Proposed School Meal Standards](#)
- Webpage: [Strengthening School Meals for Healthier Kids](#)
- Webpage: [Healthy Meals Incentives](#)
- Infographic: [USDA Support for School Meals](#)
- Infographic: [The Road Ahead: Building Back Better with School Meals](#)
- Infographic: [Ten Reasons to Build Back Even Better with School Meals!](#)

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## ***Get Ready – FFVP Application Season for the 2023-24 School Year***

It is *almost* that time of year again! North Carolina will soon open the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) application season for **eligible elementary schools** to apply to participate for the 2023-24 school year. NCDPI continues to make the annual FFVP application process efficient for School Nutrition administrators, especially for schools that applied last year.

The FFVP is **not** a required program. It is an opportunity for students to receive a fresh fruit or vegetable snack at *no cost* during the instructional school day multiple days each week when school is in session. However, for a school that applies and is selected to participate, the FFVP is *additional* work for School Nutrition administrators and respective staff. Thoughtful consideration (School Nutrition staffing, adequate refrigerated space, and more) should be given before a school applies.

For now, mark your calendar for these important dates:

- **Wednesday, March 1, 2023:** Electronic FFVP application for the 2023-2024 school year opens in the School Nutrition Technology System (Accessible only to School Nutrition administrators with “application” access)
- **Friday, March 24, 2023, 11:59 PM:** Deadline to complete electronic FFVP application for the 2023-24 school year in the School Nutrition Technology System
- **Friday, March 31, 2023:** Deadline to electronically submit the 2023-24 FFVP Signature Pages and “How Many Days the FFVP Operates Weekly” form

More information on the FFVP application for the 2023-24 school year is forthcoming in future School Nutrition Updates. Meanwhile, if anyone has FFVP questions (program requirements, operation, finances, etc.), contact Zoe McKay-Tucker, FFVP Coordinator, [zoe.mckaytucker@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:zoe.mckaytucker@dpi.nc.gov), for guidance.

## Complete the SFSP Required Annual Continuing Education (RACE) Online

NCDPI is pleased to announce the 2023 courses are open for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Required Annual Continuing Education (RACE) online training.

### What you need to know:

- There are two (2) course options.
  - **Nourishing NC Kids 2023** - for sponsors using a vendor to prepare some/all meals AND for restaurants/caterers
  - **Eat and Learn NC 2023** - for sponsors preparing all their own meals
- Each course fulfills the SFSP Required Annual Continuing Education (RACE).
- The courses are self-paced, online, through Canvas.
- Completion of RACE online is optional for Seamless Summer Option Sponsors. (An additional optional webinar is TBD.)



### What you need to do:

- Identify two (2) individuals with administrative responsibilities to complete the course.
- Determine if a NCDPI School Nutrition Canvas account for each person exists or is needed. Instructions for creating a Canvas account were included in the February 7 RACE email to School Nutrition administrators.
- Select the appropriate course based on how meals are provided. Each person will take the SAME course.
- Complete the course and upload certificates into the School Nutrition Technology System (SNTS) SFSP program application. Remember, applications are due March 1, 2023!

If you have questions about course selection, email Lynne Privette, Summer Nutrition Programs Compliance Specialist, [lynne.privette@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:lynne.privette@dpi.nc.gov). If you have questions about Canvas, email Donna Knight, Staff Development Specialist, [donna.knight@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:donna.knight@dpi.nc.gov). Thank you for your attention to this important preparation step for 2023 summer meals!

## School Nutrition Spotlight

### Rocking Health Inspections in Rockingham County

Congratulations to the Rockingham County School Nutrition staff on having perfect health inspection scores! An incredibly special thank you and debt of gratitude goes out to all our hard-working professionals for their dedication to promoting a clean and sanitary environment for our children and staff to eat each day.



## ***Celebrate Eight 2023 #NCJrChef Finalist Teams***

[Eight teams](#) of high school students from across the state will cultivate culinary creativity in the 2023 North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition. Based on applications and recipes submitted, teams from Apex High (Wake County Public Schools), Ashe County High, Brevard High (Transylvania County Schools), Franklin High (Macon County Schools), Havelock High (Craven County Schools), Northern High (Durham Public Schools), Swain County High, and Weaver Academy (Guilford County Schools) will compete as finalists in the statewide cook-off next month.



For the N.C. Jr. Chef Competition, teams of two to four students (grades 9-12) enrolled in North Carolina public schools are challenged to work with an adult team supervisor, a public school educator or School Nutrition administrator, to develop a creative recipe for a school lunch entrée. The recipes must meet the National School Lunch Program nutrition standards, include at least two North Carolina-grown products and one USDA Foods item, be replicable by School Nutrition Programs, and also appeal to student tastes. This year, at least one of the two North Carolina-grown ingredients must be cabbage (red or green), dark leafy greens (collard greens, kale, mustard greens, turnip greens, romaine, spinach, Swiss chard), legumes/beans and peas, sweetpotatoes, winter squash, or wheat.

For the recipe contest phase of the competition, teams submit applications with recipes, nutrient and cost analysis, and recipe photos. Based on a review of applications and recipes submitted, up to eight finalist teams are selected to advance to the cook-off phase of the competition.

For the cook-off phase of the competition, which has a deadline of March 10, teams will submit a video of their student chefs preparing and plating their school lunch entrée recipe. Along with the video, teams will resubmit their applications, recipes and recipe photos, and nutrient and cost analysis, incorporating feedback from the recipe review panel. In addition, they will turn in a work plan for how they will prepare their dish within the 90-minute time limit. Teams will present their dishes March 28 or 29 during virtual, live interviews with a panel of evaluators. Evaluators can ask questions and share feedback with the teams during the interviews. Teams will be evaluated for their ability to work together to demonstrate valuable skills in recipe development, food preparation, safety and sanitation, organization, and presentation and knowledge of nutrition, farm to school, and local food systems.

All N.C. Jr. Chef finalist teams will be recognized, and the competition results will be announced on March 30. Teams will be invited to participate in a virtual awards ceremony with their families, teachers, principals, School Nutrition directors, superintendents, and public information officers. Team members will receive N.C. Jr. Chef coats, hats, and aprons along with certificates and medals based on team scores. First, second, and third place teams will receive plaques to display in their school, and the first-place team will have the honor of hosting the competition trophy until the next cook-off. Sullivan University in Kentucky will offer scholarships to the student members of the top three teams. The first-place state team will advance to the Southeast Jr. Chef Competition at Sullivan University in May. Information on the N.C. Jr. Chef Competition is available on the NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition [website](#).

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## ***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.

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## ***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](mailto:tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov). Make sure to include the 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.



*Wilson County Schools*

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## ***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](mailto: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.

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## **Grant Opportunity**

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### ***Encourage Kids to Grow and Eat Veggies – Whole Kids Foundation Grant – Due 3/1***

Kids who grow veggies, eat veggies, so school gardens can make a big difference. Through the Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant program, schools and non-profit organizations can turn outdoor spaces into powerful hands-on learning gardens that connect kids with food, spark their curiosity, and support classroom curriculum. The Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant program provides a \$3,000 monetary grant to support a new or existing educational garden located at either a K-12 school or a non-profit organization that serves youth in the K-12 grade range. [Learn more and apply.](#)

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### ***Apply for Professional Development Scholarships – Due 3/31***

The deadline for School Nutrition Foundation Professional Development Scholarships has been extended to March 31, 2023! School Nutrition Association (SNA) members can achieve their educational dreams with a scholarship from the School Nutrition Foundation. These scholarships are intended to provide funding for tuition and books for the following school year. Three (3) scholarships are available for 2023: Superhero Scholarship from Bart Christian (multiple scholarships available each year), Schwan’s Food Service Scholarship (multiple scholarships of up to \$2,500 each), and the Nancy Curry Scholarship (one scholarship of \$500 is awarded each year, funded by Handgards, Inc., and friends of Nancy). Winners will be announced in Spring 2023. Use the convenient Common Application to apply for all three scholarships. [Learn more and apply.](#)

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### ***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.](#)

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### ***Growing Minds Grant – Due 15<sup>th</sup> 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 \$1000. Mini-grant applications are due every month on the 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15, 2023 and will be awarded by the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month! [Learn more and apply.](#)

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## **Nutrition Education & Promotion**

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### ***Apply for “I Love Strawberries” Resources***

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture (AFBFA) is offering free resource bundles that include a copy of the AFBFA Book of the Year: *I Love Strawberries!*, one copy of the educator guide, and one set of thirty Specialty Crop Ag Mags. [Apply](#) to receive your free materials by February 28, 2023.



## **Continuing Education**

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### ***Honoring Native American, Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Culture in Youth Gardens – 2/22, 7 pm ET***

Join KidsGardening on February 22, 2023 at 7 pm ET as they explore ways to celebrate and center culture through garden-based learning. By their nature, gardens embody diversity. Garden education is increasingly recognized as an interdisciplinary approach that integrates academic goals, health and wellness, place-based education, and community connections and relationships. However, discussion of culture is often missing in garden-based education. To validate and celebrate the interests and experiences of our students, this webinar will delve deep into the significance of culture as it relates to food and gardens and also as it relates to the diverse populations with whom we work. [Learn more and register.](#)

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### ***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).

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# Questions

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

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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) (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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