

School Nutrition Update

March 6-10, 2023



In this Issue:

Program Operations Information

- Gear Up for the 2023-24 Annual Agreement Renewal Process
- Make Your Voice Heard – Submit Comments on New Child Nutrition Standards Proposed Rule – Due 4/10

School Nutrition Spotlight

- Read Across America
- Follow/Like Us on Social Media
- Share Your School Nutrition Photos
- Send in Articles or Topics of Interest for the School Nutrition Update E-letter

Grant Opportunity

- Apply for Professional Development Scholarships – Due 3/31
- Going Local Grant – Due 4/15
- Growing Minds Grant – Due 15th of Each Month through 4/15

Nutrition Education & Promotion

- Dig In to School Breakfast! – 3/6-10

Continuing Education

- Lead to Succeed
- Access Virtual Training Resources

Program Operations Information

Gear Up for the 2023-24 Annual Agreement Renewal Process

As we gear up for the 2023-24 Annual Agreement Renewal Process, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), Office of School Nutrition is providing the Free and Reduced Priced School Meals Household Application Packet now so that School Food Authorities (SFAs) can get an early start on the Agreement process for the upcoming school year. Please find attached the following items for your use on the Free & Reduced (F & R) Price School Meals Household Application [webpage](#):

- F&R Priced Application Instructions
- Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Household Application Template (Word)
- Non Web-Based F&R Priced Application Packet with Verification Forms
- Web-Based F&R Priced Application Packet with Verification Forms (Use this option if you offer online applications.)

Instructions:

- PREPARE the SFA F&R Application and letter templates on SFA letterhead in the completed state as if it is ready to be distributed to households.
- EMAIL the SFA's Free and Reduced Priced School Meals Household Application packet for review and approval to Kayla Banks at kayla.banks@dpi.nc.gov. Once the packet is approved, it will be returned to you via email for your files.

Important Reminders:

- SFAs must submit their F&R App and Verification forms to the State Agency for approval PRIOR TO distribution to households.
- DO NOT upload the F&R Priced School Meals Household Application packet in the SN Technology System. The Free and Reduced Priced School Meals Household Application should be emailed to Kayla Banks at kayla.banks@dpi.nc.gov for review and approval.

If you have any questions, please contact Jacquelyn McGowan, School Nutrition Compliance Specialist, jacquelyn.mcgowan@dpi.nc.gov, or your Zone Consultant.

Make Your Voice Heard – Submit Comments on New Child Nutrition Standards Proposed Rule – Due 4/10

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](#)". The proposed rule contains new Child Nutrition regulations regarding the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Programs, and Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Every voice matters! Submit your comments on how the new regulations in 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. 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](#).

School Nutrition Spotlight

Read Across America

Schools across the state celebrated Read Across America Week with a variety of activities. School Nutrition teams decorated serving lines, dressed as book characters, offered special menus, and participated in other school-based celebration activities. Beaufort, Rockingham, Union, Wake, and Wilson County Schools shared photos of school meals featuring “green eggs and ham” and festivities in celebration of Read Across America Week and the March 2nd birthday of Dr. Seuss. What fun! Please tag @NCSchoolMeals with your photos and posts on social media.



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 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

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

Apply for Professional Development Scholarships – Due 3/31

The deadline for School Nutrition Foundation Professional Development Scholarships is 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.](#)

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.](#)

Nutrition Education & Promotion

Dig In to School Breakfast! – 3/6-10

National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) celebrates the importance of a nutritious school breakfast in fueling students for success. #NSBW23 is March 6-10. The 2023 theme is “Dig In to School Breakfast.” NSBW is an opportunity to have fun promoting school breakfast. The national School Nutrition Association has a free [toolkit](#) with artwork, a sample proclamation and press release, presentation, social media resources, and more available.

Plan now to celebrate NSBW. Share your celebration activities on social media. Tag @NCSchoolMeals.



Continuing Education

Lead to Succeed

The School Nutrition Foundation (SNF) LEAD to Succeed™ Initiative includes workforce tools and training modules developed specifically for School Nutrition professionals seeking to *Learn, Educate, Advance, and Develop* in the School Nutrition field. LEAD to Succeed™ was made possible through a \$2 million grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food & Nutrition Service and developed with a team from Georgetown University, McDonough School of Business. The initiative addresses workforce development needs for School Nutrition professionals in the areas of Personnel Management, Communication, Marketing, and Customer Service. Thanks to the USDA grant, these high-caliber professional development tools are open to national School Nutrition Association (SNA) members and non-members and will be available at no cost for all. All four modules (totaling 12 hours and 45 minutes of training) are available now to complete in the SNA Training Zone. [Learn more and complete the training.](#)



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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- (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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