

School Nutrition Update

May 8-12, 2023



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Program Operations Information

Know the Steps to Apply to Operate Non-Congregate Rural Meal Sites

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued guidance allowing non-congregate meal service in certain rural areas, with State Agency approval, for the summer of 2023 in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Summer Seamless Option (SSO). To apply to operate non-congregate rural meal sites, please complete the following steps:

1. Read the following policy memos:
 - a. [SFSP 01-2023, SP 05-2023](#)
 - b. [SFSP 07-2023, SP 14-2023](#)
2. Submit prospective non-congregate rural meal site locations to the State Agency/N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) for review and approval of rural designation. Please send site locations in an email with the subject line "Non-Congregate Rural Sites" to summernutritionprogram@dpi.nc.gov.
3. Upon approval of step 2, submit procedures for operation of non-congregate sites for NCDPI approval, including but not limited to plans for operation, meal distribution, accountability, and monitoring. Please send in an email with the subject "Non-Congregate Procedures" to summernutritionprogram@dpi.nc.gov.
4. Upon approval of step 3, sign and submit attestation forms (provided by NCDPI at this step) to summernutritionprogram@dpi.nc.gov.
5. Upon approval of step 4, NCDPI will add non-congregate rural meal site applications to the School Nutrition Technology System (SNTS) for completion by the sponsor.
6. NCDPI will review and approve site applications.

Please reach out to Jennifer Bailey, Section Chief, jennifer.bailey@dpi.nc.gov, for more information.

Connecting Farmers to Schools with USDA Farm to School Formula Grant

The NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition recently received a State Farm to School Formula Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The focus of the grant is to provide training and technical assistance to help small, local farmers achieve Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification, work to overcome barriers to facilitate small, historically underutilized farms access into the School Nutrition marketplace, and link local growers to the N.C. Farm to School Program. Through the grant, NCDPI has contracted with Gary Gay, retired

Director of the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), Food Distribution Division, and Cindy Marion, retired School Nutrition Director and former member of the N.C. Farm to School Program Advisory Committee, to serve as consultants. With their background and expertise, they will collaborate with NCDA&CS Consultants and Field Representatives, N.C. Cooperative Extension Agents, NCDPI staff, and other partners to connect farmers to schools for opportunities to collaborate. This grant project is intended to support the work of NCDA&CS Consultants and N.C. Cooperative Extension Agents. To request assistance in connecting with local farmers, please contact Cindy Marion, cindy.marion@dpi.nc.gov, and Gary Gay, gary.gay@dpi.nc.gov.

Meet the May 10 Deadline to Comment on the New Child Nutrition Standards Proposed Rule

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 proposes allowing schools to include locally grown, raised, or caught as a requirement for vendors bidding to provide food for their school meal programs. In addition, USDA proposes updating the Buy American provision by setting a limit of 5% of total food costs on non-domestic food purchases. USDA is also 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.

School Nutrition professionals and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the [proposed rule and related materials](#) and [submit comments](#) by May 10. Make sure USDA understands how the proposed rule will impact your programs, schools, and students. Every voice matters! The actual number of comments received makes a tremendous difference in the outcome. You may submit more than one comment as you have additional thoughts, data, or information to share. USDA will review and record all comments submitted.

School Nutrition Spotlight

Promoting Community Wellness

Pitt County School Nutrition and the School Nutrition Association of North Carolina (SNA-NC) Pitt Chapter participated in a community wellness event at Wildwood Park on Saturday, April 29. Several members dressed in N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) farm-to-school costumes. N.C. Farm-to-School Program watermelon activity books were distributed. The event was open to all ages and had many other community groups providing wellness activities that included games, yoga, kayaking, etc. In addition, fresh produce and water were given away. What a fun community outreach event!



Exploring Farm to Table in Craven County Schools

Craven County Schools celebrated Farm-to-School Week May 1-5. Elementary school students learned about agriculture through a farming expo. Middle schools competed with their best farm-to-school cheer. High school students participated in a culinary competition, creating recipes for school meals with locally grown ingredients. The school menu featured delicious, nutritious locally grown items from North Carolina farmers and ranchers. See photos and learn more from the Craven County School Nutrition's [social media](#).



Bring Your Legislator to School Day – May 15

N.C. General Assembly (NCGA) legislators have been invited to visit schools in their district on May 15 for the inaugural “[Bring Your Legislator to School Day](#)”. The event is a joint effort of the N.C. Regional Teachers of the Year (TOYs), Regional Principals of the Year (POYs), and the Public School Forum of North Carolina. The initiative has bipartisan support with legislative co-sponsors, Sen. Amy Galey, Sen. Rachel Hunt, Sen. Graig Meyer, Rep. Vernatta Alston, Rep. Allen Buansi, Rep. Ashton Clemmons, Rep. Kevin Crutchfield, Rep. Zack Hawkins, and Rep. John Torbett.

All NCGA legislators received an invitation and have been asked to RSVP. The N.C. TOYs and POYs along with the Public School Forum of North Carolina will work to pair the legislators with a public school unit in their district and notify superintendents. During their school visit, legislators are encouraged to engage in a walk through of schools with the principal, superintendent, and student ambassadors, observe classroom instruction, participate in individual focus groups/roundtable discussions with teachers, students, and families, enjoy a meal in a school café, and ride a bus with students. This is a wonderful opportunity for legislators to learn more about the successes, challenges, and needs of students, school staff, and families. Be ready to showcase your School Nutrition Programs!

THANK YOU!

BRING YOUR LEGISLATOR TO SCHOOL DAY MAY 15, 2023

House of Representatives

Rep. Eric Ager
Rep. Vernatta Alston
Rep. Kanika Brown
Rep. Allen Buansi
Rep. Maria Cervania
Rep. Kevin Crutchfield
Rep. Francis Jackson
Rep. Chris Humphrey
Rep. Ray Jeffers
Rep. Joe John
Rep. Donnie Loftis
Rep. Tim Longest
Rep. Charles Miller
Rep. Marcia Morey
Rep. Garland Pierce
Rep. Renee Price
Rep. Reece Pyrtle

Rep. Rim Reeder
Rep. Stephen Ross
Rep. Frank Sossamon
Rep. John Torbett
Rep. Julie von Haefen
Rep. Shelly Willingham
Rep. Jeff Zenger
Rep. Amber Baker
Rep. Matthew Winslow
Rep. Laura Budd
Rep. Kristin Baker
Rep. Terry Brown
Rep. James Roberson
Rep. Cynthia Ball
Rep. Becky Carney
Rep. Lindsey Pather
Rep. Sarah Crawford

Senate

Sen. Ted Alexander
Sen. Van Applewhite
Sen. Lisa Barnes
Sen. Sydney Batch
Sen. Mary Willis Bode
Sen. Danny Britt
Sen. Jay Chaudhuri
Sen. Carl Ford
Sen. Amy Galey
Sen. Lisa Grafstein
Sen. Rachel Hunt
Sen. Steve Jarvis
Sen. Joyce Krawiec
Sen. Natasha Marcus
Sen. Julie Mayfield
Sen. Graig Meyer
Sen. Norman Sanderson
Sen. Eddie Settle
Sen. Kandice Smith
Sen. Mike Woodard

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.



Craven 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.

Job Opportunity

Apply for Harnett County Schools Child Nutrition Director Position

Harnett County Schools is seeking applicants for the Child Nutrition Director position. Applicants must have at least eight hours of food safety training either not more than five years prior to their starting date or completed within 30 days of the employee’s start date AND one of the following:

- Bachelor’s degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field, OR
- Bachelor’s degree in any academic major and at least five years of experience in management of School Nutrition Programs, OR
- Bachelor’s degree in any academic major and State-recognized certificate for school.

[Learn more and apply](#). The position is open until filled.

Work with Wake County Child Nutrition

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), Child Nutrition Services (CNS) is seeking applicants for an open Area Supervisor position. 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

Learn More and 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](#). A [recording of the informational webinar](#) held on April 5 is now available. For questions regarding applications, please contact the Grant Officer, Anna Arrowsmith, anna.arrowsmith@usda.gov.

Apply for Healthy Meals Incentives Grants for Small and/or Rural School Food Authorities – Due 5/26

As part of a cooperative agreement to develop and implement the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) [Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative](#), Action for Healthy Kids is offering competitive grants (up to \$150,000 per School Food Authority, SFA) for small and/or rural SFAs to support efforts to improve the nutritional quality of their school meals. The deadline for submitting a [grant application](#) is 5:00 pm ET, on May 26, 2023.

Eligibility Criteria:

- SFA must participate in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program
- SFA must meet the following definitions of small and/or rural:
 - **Small SFA:** SFA with an enrollment of less than or equal to 5,000 students.
 - **Rural SFA:** The majority of students within the SFA are enrolled in a rural school as defined by a locality code of 41, 42, or 43, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics online tool](#).

The Healthy Meals Incentives Grants for small and/or rural SFAs are a key part of USDA, FNS [Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative](#), which was established to improve the nutritional quality of school meals through food systems transformation, school food authority recognition and technical assistance, the generation and sharing of innovative ideas and tested practices, and grants. Questions about this announcement may be sent to support@healthymealsincentives.org.

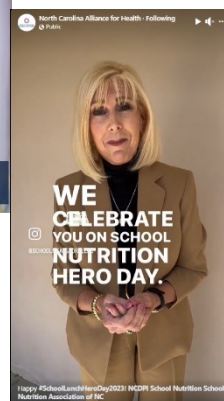
Transform Communities with the Lots of Compassion Grant – Due 6/2

Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day and KidsGardening have announced their new Lots of Compassion grant program, designed to support local leaders looking to transform vacant lots into gardens to help grow compassion in their community. In 2023, 10 grantees will receive \$20,000 each to transform a vacant lot into a garden. [Learn more and apply.](#)

Nutrition Education & Promotion

Celebrating School Nutrition Heroes

Public School Units (PSUs) across the state recognized #NCSchoolNutritionHeroes for #SchoolLunchHeroDay, or #SchoolNutritionHeroDay as we celebrate it in North Carolina. State Superintendent Catherine Truitt and NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition Director, Dr. Lynn Harvey, recorded special video messages to thank N.C. School Nutrition professionals for all they do each day to nourish students' bodies, minds, and souls. In addition, regional Principals and Teachers of the Year recorded gratitude messages. Check out the videos and all the recognition messages on social media, @NCSchoolMeals.



Check out the N.C. School Nutrition Heroes' Hall of Fame

To celebrate School Nutrition Hero Day, the Carolina Hunger Initiative (CHI) and No Kid Hungry North Carolina team put together a [super-team of hero profiles](#). With all the schools serving meals in North Carolina, there are more heroes than could be recognized at once. This team represents the heroes statewide, as nominated by principals, administrators, and colleagues who took the time to highlight the great work happening in their schools and districts. THANK YOU from the Carolina Hunger Initiative team to all the School Nutrition Heroes statewide!



Celebrate May as Strawberry Month

Did you know May is Strawberry Month? Wonderful resources are available to help you with nutrition education and promotion! The N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), N.C. Farm to School Program offers a [strawberry storybook, activity guide, and poster](#) that follows strawberries from the field to school meal. NCDA&CS worked with the N.C. Farm Bureau (NCFB), Ag in the Classroom to create [strawberry lesson plans](#) and an [Ag Mag](#). The NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition offers a [strawberry fact sheet](#) on how strawberries are grown, harvested, selected, stored, prepared, and taught about. N.C. Cooperative Extension offers a resource on how to grow [Strawberries in Schools](#) as part of classroom activities. Share how you are celebrating Strawberry Month with us on social media. Tag @NCSchoolMeals.



Continuing Education

Power Up Your School Day with Potatoes – 5/10, 3 pm ET

Join the national School Nutrition Association on May 10 at 3 pm ET to learn how to power up your school meals with potatoes. Chef R.J. Harvey and Bonnie Johnson share their culinary and nutritional expertise with School Nutrition professionals. The webinar will show how operators can count on America's favorite

vegetable to help solve their most common kitchen problems. Potatoes offer labor saving, affordable, and easy-to-prepare solutions that meet consumers' demands and desires, as well as provide exceptional nutritional benefits. [Learn more and register.](#)

Serve as an ICN Panelist

Are you looking for a way to highlight the work your School Nutrition staff accomplishes? Do you want to share ideas that your team has adopted to sustain your



School Nutrition STAR Program

Strategies • **T**raining • **A**ction Plans • **R**esources

Workforce Development and Job Skills Training

program? The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) is currently seeking panelists who are engaging, enthusiastic, effective communicators for the STAR Webinar Series. The School Nutrition STAR (Strategies, Trainings, Action Plans, and Resources) Webinars aim to assist in meeting the unique training, technical assistance, and professional development needs of School Nutrition professionals. The webinars are also designed to provide best practices and goal development to improve program administration and operations. The STAR webinars are held the last Thursday of each month, 3:00-4:00 pm ET.

ICN would like to collaborate with panelists that have experience in adopting quality customer service, enhancing school menus, managing HACCP plans, procuring local foods, marketing School Nutrition Programs, and motivating School Nutrition staff. Your commitment will consist of a 20-minute presentation, short biography, clear and visible headshot, and participation in a practice run prior to the live webinar. If you are interested, please fill out the [interest form](#).

Enroll in New Online School Nutrition Course this Summer

Join your School Nutrition colleagues for a dynamic, 100% online, 5-week summer session course, offered by Appalachian State University (ASU), to sharpen your leadership and management skills! The course is asynchronous, which means students do the coursework on their own schedule. Students can meet with their instructor for discussion and questions during weekly Zoom office hours. The course supports the USDA and School Nutrition Association Professional Standards for School Nutrition professionals.

Instructors:

- John Arrowood, MS, RD – App State Nutrition Faculty
- Cindy S. Marion, MS – Former Executive Director of Child Nutrition
- Kyle Thompson, DCN, RDN – App State Nutrition Faculty

Class timeframe: July 6 – August 8

NUT 4535/5545: Topics in School Nutrition Leadership & Management Course Topics:

- Week 1: Introduction to School Nutrition
- Week 2: Financial Management in School Nutrition
- Week 3: Staff Management and Development
- Week 4: Communication and Marketing
- Week 5: Policy and Advocacy

Enrollment deadlines:

- For those with bachelor's degree (NUT 5545): May 8
- For those with associate degree (NUT 4535): June 30

For more information about the course and how to enroll, contact John Arrowood, arrowoodj@appstate.edu, or Kyle Thompson, thompsonkl@appstate.edu. If you have feedback or suggestions for additional School Nutrition related courses, please reach out to John Arrowood.

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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