



School Nutrition Programs

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

This weekly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to providing education, training, and technical assistance opportunities to school nutrition professionals, helping to ensure seamless operations for those participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs. If you are the food service contact for your school or facility, please be certain that everyone on your team has access to this important information.

Tip of the Week

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Requirement: Summer Meals Advertisement

All NSLP sponsors must advertise the availability of free meals for children during the summer. Sponsors that serve meals at open sites under the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO) should advertise their meal locations. Sponsors that do not participate in summer meal service must notify families that meals may be available in the community. Sponsors can provide the following site finder resource information to households:

- [USDA Site Finder Map](#)
- Hunger Hotline
 - Families seeking food assistance for their children can contact the USDA National Hunger Hotline, operated by Hunger Free America. The hotline can be reached Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. ET at 1-866-3-HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479) for English or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (1-877-842-6273) for Spanish.

Please note these site finder options are currently under construction by USDA. Stay tuned for summer 2026 updates soon.

Important Updates

New Training Platform

On Wednesday, July 1, IDOE will launch a new training platform for sponsors: The Nutrition Hub. Hosted by the Indiana Learning Lab, The Nutrition Hub will become the new home of all school nutrition program training. This includes an array of training from the required Civil Rights and Ethics training, to supplemental training to help staff meet required professional standards.

During the transition, Moodle will remain available to sponsors but will eventually be phased out. To ensure no data is lost and to keep files current for Administrative Reviews, take some time to download, save, and print any staff training certificates. More information on this transition is coming soon.

2026-2027 Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool is Now Available

The school year (SY) 2026-2027 PLE tool is now available for sponsors on IDOE's [Financial Management webpage](#), which also includes step-by-step instructions and other helpful resources. Click [here](#) to access the tool. As a reminder, School Food Authorities (SFAs) with positive or zero balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2025, are exempt from PLE pricing requirements found in [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)](#) for SY 2026-2027.

SFAs that qualify for this exemption must complete the [attestation statement](#) to confirm their exempt status. Exempt SFAs may still use the PLE tool to complete the steps necessary to determine their target paid lunch price for SY 2026-2027, consistent with program regulations in 7 CFR 210.14(e), and adjust their paid lunch prices accordingly.

School Food Service Employee of the Year

During a school assembly on Friday, May 1, Lori Tucker (pictured, right), Food Service Manager at North White Elementary School, received IDOE's 2026 School Food Service Employee of the Year award. Tucker received a plaque from IDOE and a check for \$250 from the American Dairy Association Indiana, Inc. Dennis Briciu (pictured, left), Principal of North White Elementary School, nominated Mrs. Tucker for the award, sharing that she creates a warm and welcoming cafeteria environment, encourages students to try new foods, and her positive spirit and dedication reflect a genuine passion for school food service and a deep respect for the important role it plays in student success. IDOE has recognized outstanding school food service employees who contribute significantly to the health and learning capabilities of students for 29 years.



Farm to School

Creating Pipelines from School Gardens to Cafeterias

This month's Indiana Office Hours session will spotlight schools across the state that are successfully creating effective pipelines to bring garden-grown produce directly into their cafeterias. Whether just beginning to explore garden integration or looking to expand what's already in place, this session will offer practical strategies, templates, and success stories to help schools build a sustainable system that connects the classroom, the garden, and the cafeteria. The session is Wednesday, May 20, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. ET. Register [here](#)!

Farm to School Recipe Contest for Indiana High School Culinary Students

The Indiana Grown for Schools Network and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) are excited to release registration for the third annual Farm to School Recipe Contest for Indiana high school students. Students will create a recipe using either apples, to celebrate [Indiana Apple Crunch](#), or tomatoes, to celebrate [Indiana Food Day](#). The purpose for the contest is to increase awareness of school meal programs among students and provide a specific way to celebrate these Farm to School initiatives. Winning students will receive an Indiana Grown for Schools network swag bag, a highlight on social media, and more! Learn more and register [here](#).

USDA Foods

PrimerEdge Re-allocation Notifications

IDOE is in the process of catalog balancing and reconciliation. This entails reallocating, and in some cases reducing, USDA Foods cases and/or processor pounds to meet USDA truck requirements. When changes are made, PrimerEdge may send an automated notification to School Food Authorities (SFAs). No additional action is required for these routine notifications. Questions regarding the notifications can be directed to fdp@doe.in.gov.

Direct Delivered/Direct Ship USDA Foods Allocations and Delivery Deadlines

- Allocations for direct delivered USDA Foods ended on Thursday, April 30.
- Direct Delivered USDA Foods deliveries to schools end on or before Tuesday, June 30, depending on the delivery period.

Processed Goods/Processed USDA Foods

Bulk pounds remaining at the processor on Tuesday, June 30, will rollover to SY 2026-2027.

Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program

DoD Funds remaining in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) by Tuesday, June 30, do not rollover over to next school year and will be lost.

All USDA Foods are intended to be used in the year they are allocated.

USDA Foods Cancellations for SY 2026-2027

- 100256 Frozen Strawberry Cups (January-September 2026)
- 100258 Frozen Apple Slices
- 110721 Sweet Potato Slices
- 110921 Frozen Chicken Fillet, Unbreaded

USDA Foods Recipe Ideas

Looking for recipes to use your USDA Foods? Check out these resources:

- [Wild Blueberry Recipes](#)
- [Recipes for Healthy Kids](#)
- [Recipes for Schools - Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#)
- [Team Nutrition Recipes](#)

Procurement

Procurement Information

Do you have questions about procurement click [here](#) or contact the [SCN Procurement mailbox](#) for assistance.

Training and Webinar Opportunities

2026 Back to School Training Registration Now Open

Registration is now open for IDOE's Annual Back to School Training on Wednesday, July 8, at Martinsville High School. This event will be packed with relevant information for staff in all areas of school nutrition, including front-line staff, programming and administration, and finance and budgeting. Topics will include customer service, team building, Farm to School, procurement, and more, with the complete agenda available soon. To register for this event, click [here](#). Please note that registration is capped at 310 and spots are available on a first come, first served basis.

Spring Webinars

Check out our upcoming webinar list [here](#), as new events are added regularly. Click the links below for more details and to register.

- [Recordkeeping Reminders](#) - Thursday, May 14, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET.

If there is a specific topic you would like to see covered, let us know by filling out [this form](#)!

Reminders

USDA Professional Standards Trainings and Tracker Tool

USDA's public comment period for the proposed information collection regarding the Professional Standards Trainings and Tracker Tool (PSTTT) is open until Monday, June 1. This collection is an extension, without change, of a currently approved collection. It assists state agencies and school nutrition professionals in searching for trainings, recording, tracking, and managing the required training hours for state and local school district nutrition professionals, in four major areas (nutrition, operations, administration, and communications and marketing), to meet the requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 Professional Standards Rule. To learn more and submit a public comment, click [here](#).

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Election Period Now Open

Election Period Information:

The CEP election period for the 2026-2027 school year is officially open and runs through Tuesday, June 30. Local school corporations must determine initial eligibility using Direct Certification (DC) and enrollment data collected around Wednesday, April 1. The data must be submitted to your assigned field specialist using the [CEP worksheet](#). Once any additional requested information is submitted, a validation process will occur before final approval and the collection of a signed agreement.

How CEP Works:

CEP allows high-poverty schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students, ensuring they are well nourished and able to learn throughout the school day.

Under CEP:

- Schools do not collect free and reduced-price meal applications.
- Reimbursement is based on the percentage of Identified Students (students directly certified for free meals).
- The Identified Student Percentage is multiplied by 1.6 to determine the share of meals reimbursed at the free rate; the remainder is reimbursed at the paid rate. *Example: A school with 50% Identified Students receives reimbursement at the free rate for 80% of meals served (50 x 1.6) and at the paid rate for the remaining 20%.*
- Participating schools must serve both breakfast and lunch every school day, at no charge to students.

Minimum Application Requirements:

A school district may implement CEP in any school or group of schools with a minimum of 25% or more Identified Students.

Helpful evaluation tools include:

- [CEP Estimator Tool](#)
- [CEP Slider Tool](#)

Additional resources are available on IDOE's [CEP webpage](#). For more information, contact your assigned School Nutrition Programs field specialist.

Summer Meal Site Overlap

Sponsors planning to operate the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) should work with their local agencies and other local sponsors to reduce site overlap. To ensure program integrity and prevent the duplication of meal services by sites located within close proximity to each other and operating on the same day for the same meal type(s), IDOE defines close proximity between sites as:

- For rural congregate meals: 0.5 mile
- For rural noncongregate meals: 10 miles
- For urban congregate meals: 0.5 mile
- For noncongregate adjacent to urban area: Determined on a case-by-case basis.

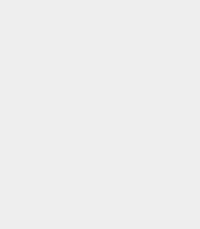
Sites that are in close proximity may be approved on a case-by-case basis or using the [regulatory priority system](#). View IDOE's [Summer Site Cap Policy](#) and [Summer Site Proximity Policy](#) for more information. Sponsors can also utilize the USDA [Capacity Builder](#) and the best practices outlined in [SFSP 15-2023](#) to assist in planning sites.

Updates from Our Partners

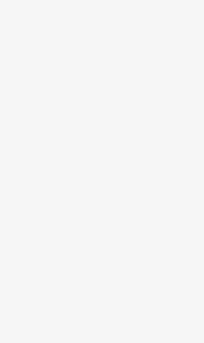
Indiana Healthy Schools Professional Development Collection Form

[The Indiana School Health Coalition](#) is creating a professional development plan to support growth and learning for Indiana's school health professionals. The coalition is requesting assistance as they conduct a gap analysis on existing professional development (PD) opportunities for school staff in Indiana. The goal is to capture what PD already exists so they can work to identify what is needed. Please take a moment to complete this brief form: [Professional Development Collection Form](#). The deadline to submit the form is Sunday, May 31. For any questions, please contact Emma Smythe at esmythe@health.in.gov.

Upcoming Dates



Monday, June 1	Final Due Date for March Claim
Monday, June 1	PSTTT Comment Period Ends
Monday, June 29	Final Due Date for April Claim
Tuesday, June 30	CEP Application Closes
Wednesday, July 1	Annual Financial Report Opens



Additional Resources

[School Nutrition Programs Calendar](#)
[IDOE's Nutrition Webpage](#)
[CNPweb](#)