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School Nutrition Programs Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education



Indiana Department of Education sent this bulletin at 02/14/2024 04:00 PM EST



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

School Nutrition Programs

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

Wellness Policy Reminders

Remember to follow the local wellness policy guidelines for food not sold in schools. Classroom celebrations, end of year parties, and food-based reward guidelines should be followed as written in the local policy. Additionally, make sure the fundraiser limit of only two exempt fundraisers per building per year has been followed and documented when appropriate. Review IDOE's Wellness Policies [here](#).

Important Updates

Micropurchase Self-Certification Threshold Guidance

School Food Authorities (SFAs) may self-certify a micropurchase threshold up to \$50,000. Below is guidance for public schools, along with a link to the State Board of Accounts (SBOA) School Bulletin containing additional clarification. We hope to provide additional guidance for non-public schools in future newsletters.

- [SBOA School Bulletin, June 2022](#) – page 6.
- This self-certification is for ALL Federal programs and should be developed at the district-level, not by individual federal programs.
- Self-certification must be completed and documented annually at the district-level.
- Questions about certification and documentation should be sent to your school business office and/or SBOA.

Serving Up Science: The Path to Safe Food in Schools

IDOE is accepting nominations for [Serving up Science](#), a program designed to help child nutrition professionals better understand the food system and the principles of food science that provide the basis for a strong food safety plan. If selected, participants and their employers are responsible for all costs incurred for travel to and from Manhattan, Kansas. Other program expenses, including meals and lodging, are provided Monday evening through noon on Friday while participants are in Manhattan.

Nominations are currently being accepted for the summer session which goes Monday, June 24, through Friday, June 28. If interested, please email SCNtrainings@doe.in.gov no later than Friday, February 23.

Farm to School Symposium

IDOE and the Indiana Grown for Schools Network are hosting a Farm to School and Early Childcare Education (ECE) Symposium at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds on Tuesday, June 18, and

Wednesday, June 19. Participants will learn about gardening, local procurement, and agriculture education. Educators, food service staff, and school administrators are invited to attend. Submit proposals for presentations and panel discussions [here](#) and submit vendor applications [here](#). Contact [Sophie Lindley](#) with any questions.

USDA Foods

Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey

The Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey closes at 4 p.m. ET on Friday, March 1. This survey is mandatory for all schools that will receive USDA Foods for the 2024-2025 school year.

Decrease in USDA Foods Entitlement for School Year (SY) 2024-2025

Per USDA, meal counts decreased nationwide which has caused a decrease in state entitlement. IDOE received lower entitlement for SY 2024-2025 which is divided among approximately 600 school districts on the Food Distribution Program. Due to the reduction in entitlement for IDOE, schools received lower Planned Assistance Level (PAL) amounts for SY 2024-2025. PAL is calculated by multiplying meals served for the previous school year by USDA's per meal rate. Then, based on the amount of entitlement that IDOE receives it is allocated to schools based on fair share. USDA Foods represent 15-20% of the school food budget.

Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Allocation Adjustments

IDOE has received several requests to adjust the DoD allocation due to the lower entitlement amounts. IDOE is currently working with a third-party vendor to adjust the DoD allocation requests as quickly as possible. When the adjustment is complete, there will be announcement in this newsletter, in the Food Distribution Program (FDP) update, and on the message screen in CNPweb.

USDA Foods Should Be Checked and Ordered Consistently

We are nearly seven months into the 2023-2024 school year. Schools should review USDA Foods inventory and make decisions regarding usage and placing consistent orders. Schools should regularly check Direct Delivered (Brown Box) at the state assigned warehouses, (Digard Frozen Foods, Stanz-Troyers Foodservice and Wabash Foods) and Direct Diverted (Bulk Pounds) USDA Foods at processing companies. Schools should also be checking and utilizing DoD Fresh funds via the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS). USDA Foods and DoD Funds are intended to be utilized in the year they are allocated.



USDA Foods Recipes

A [Peach and Yogurt Smoothie](#) is a quick and easy way to serve a to-go breakfast using your USDA peaches. Who can resist [Nachos with Diced Chicken](#)? They're a good way to use USDA diced chicken.

Training and Webinar Opportunities

School Breakfast Week Webinar Series

Register for the Culinary Skills virtual workshops [here](#). IDOE Best Practices webinar on Thursday, February 22. Register [here](#).



USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Webinar for Schools

[Register here](#) for USDA's CEP updates and requirements webinar on Wednesday, February 21, at 2 p.m. ET. This webinar will be offered with closed captioning. Participants who require a different accessibility tool to participate in this webinar should reach out to [USDA](#) for assistance as soon as possible.

Reminders

Round 4 of Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Funds

For those who applied, SCA funds for round four have been disbursed and should appear under the payments tab in CNPweb. The ACH deposit notification comment will say "SC_R4." The deposits should arrive in your accounts by early next week. Please remember all SCA funds must be deposited into the School Foodservice Account (0800) and used specifically for the purchase of food as described in the [Supply Chain Assistance Funds FAQ](#). If you receive an unexpected payment, click on the *Payments* tab (next to the *Claims* tab), find the amount that was paid, and then click the arrow (>) to the far left under *Batch Number*. The description of the payment will identify what items are included in the payment amount. Additionally, if the payment is less than expected, the description will show deductions,

such as USDA Foods storage fees. All Supply Chain Funds show under the "Other" column on the payments tab.

Program Year: 2022 Sponsor: [redacted]

Sponsor Summary

Assigned Specialist: Kingler, Emily (317) 407-2714 | ekingler@doe.in.gov Date: 9/15/2023 Adams County (IF)

Open Balance Transactions	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack	Milk	Match	FFVP	Other	Total Payable	
Total Open Transactions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Batch Number	Process Date	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack	Milk	Match	FFVP	Other	Total Payment
52	9/15/2023	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,489.38	3,489.38
July 2023 Manual Adjustment		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,489.38	3,489.38
Supply Chain Funds (USDA's Summer)									

IDOE Encourages Participation in Summer Meals Program

IDOE issued a [press release](#) concerning the availability of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The SFSP is designed to fill the nutritional gap during summer months when school is out of session and food insecurity is often at the highest level. As sponsors of child nutrition programs who serve children throughout the school year, local educational agencies make good candidates for summer meal program sponsorship. The two primary ways to qualify for the SFSP sponsorship is by using the school's free & reduced meal eligibility data or the US Census block [data](#).

In December 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (the Act) ([PL 117-328](#)) was signed into law, with significant policy changes for Child Nutrition programming, including the authorization of a permanent, non-congregate meal service through the SFSP and NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO). The Act allows qualifying sponsors to distribute meals in non-congregate style, using either the meal pick-up or home delivery method in areas where there are currently no congregate meal service sites. The same Act also authorized the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children Program (S-EBT); however, these are two separate programs, so households may participate in both S-EBT and SFSP.

There is a streamlined SFSP application process for current child nutrition sponsors which is scheduled to open in CNPweb in March. For more information, contact summermeals@doe.in.gov.

New Food Buying Guide Tools

Check out the new content available in the [Food Buying Guide \(FBG\) for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-Based Tool](#), including:

- An interactive flow chart on using the preparation yield factor in the Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW);
- An ounces to pounds calculator that makes converting units a breeze; and
- New USDA Foods frozen mixed vegetables and a variety of meat items available in the FBG.

Team Nutrition (TN) Virtual Training Update

All 40 hours of TN Virtual Training are now available in Moodle for managers and directors. Additionally, all eight hours of training for frontline staff is available. Upon completion of the training, you will receive a certificate. You will then need to complete the [Training Completion Form](#). Note that you will not be eligible for the monetary incentive without both the certificate and Training Completion Form on file. When IDOE receives the form, you will be emailed next steps, including required paperwork for the Central Indiana Educational Services Center (CIESC) to process the incentive payment. Make sure to complete all forms or payment will not be processed. Allow at least one month to receive payment. The first 250 food service directors and 250 kitchen managers who complete the 40 hours of training will be rewarded \$500. The first 250 frontline staff that complete the eight hours of training will be rewarded \$100. Read through the [frequently-asked questions \(FAQs\)](#) and contact the [TN Training Grant team](#) with any questions.

Upcoming Dates



Wednesday, February 14	IDOE 2024 School Food Service Employee of the Year Nominations Due
Thursday, February 15, at 10 a.m. ET	After School Snack and Meal Options
Thursday, February 15, 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Savory Breakfast Ideas
Wednesday, February 21, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET	Indiana Uplands Winter Food Summit
Wednesday, February 21, at 2 p.m. ET	USDA CEP Webinar

Tuesday, February 27, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET	Northeast Indiana Local Food Networking Event
Thursday, February 29, 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Breakfast in the Classroom
Friday, March 1, 4 p.m. ET	Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey Due
Monday, April 29	Summer EBT Final Rule Comments Due
Tuesday, April 30	Lake Michigan School Food System Innovation Hub Application Deadline

Additional Resources

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

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Department News

- [02/09/24 Indiana Department of Education Announces Recipients of High-Quality Summer Programming Grant](#)
- [02/07/24 Indiana Department of Education Deploys Latest Round of Enhancements to the Indiana GPS Dashboard](#)

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