



THE OUTLOOK

A Monthly Newsletter for School Nutrition Programs

CULINARY INSTITUTE OF CHILD NUTRITION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition is excited to announce the launch of the [Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition](#) (CICN), a new division of the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) that provides school nutrition professionals with in-depth, hands-on culinary training and resources that are foundational for scratch-based cooking and the creation of culinary-inspired school meals that are healthy, flavorful, and student-approved!



CICN Resources and Events

CICN WEBSITE: Explore CICN's new website – an online information center that provides School Nutrition Program operators with a means for accessing valuable culinary resources for their program operations. The CICN website serves as a centralized place to store, organize, manage, and share culinary knowledge and tools developed by the CICN, state agencies, and allied organizations with School Nutrition Program operators. Visit the CICN website at theicn.org/cicn. Check out the [i-Bites Recipe Videos](#), a series of short culinary videos designed by the CICN to provide school nutrition program operators with topic-based culinary information and resources.

CICN CULINARY WEBINAR SERIES: Starting April 1, the CICN will host a one-hour monthly culinary webinar series that occurs on the first Thursday of each month and focuses on culinary topics that enhance the overall cafeteria experience, including "Visually Marketing Foods,"

"Scratch-made Salad Dressings and Condiments," and "How and When to Use Fresh Herbs." [Click here to register for the April webinar!](#)

THE MIXUP PODCAST SERIES: In this podcast series, Chef Patrick Garmong, Associate Director of Culinary Education and Training at the CICN, interviews School Nutrition Program chefs from around the country to take a peek inside their kitchen operations and see how they are inspiring child nutrition. Check out the MixUp Podcast series at the icn.org/podcast.

COMING SOON — GRAB & GO RECIPES: The CICN will launch a series of scratch-based cooking recipes for grab & go meal service that can be easily produced in School Nutrition Program kitchens nationwide using minimal equipment and foods that are readily available. Each recipe card will feature a standardized recipe in 50 and 100 serving quantities as well as visual step-by-step instructions for production of the recipe.

NEWS BRIEFS

USDA

A new feature is available on the [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool \(PSTTT\)](https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usda.gov/). In response to user requests, The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition has added a new capability for school directors. Directors now can request additional access to manage and log employee training for multiple districts. PSTTT users who would like to utilize this new feature may do so by using the "Contact Us" feature available under the "Help" tab on the tool. Track your professional standards required training hours today using the USDA's free Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool: <https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usda.gov/>.

UPCOMING EVENT



The School Nutrition Association announced that its **Annual National Conference** will be held virtually during the week of July 12, 2021. Registration for the first Virtual ANC will open in mid-April. Keep an eye on the [SNA website](#), where they will share more details about the conference as the date nears.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Pilot Light, a non-profit that aims for children to be better educated about food, launched a new PreK-12th grade plug and play curriculum for teachers called Pilot Light Anywhere, which can be used in classrooms or for eLearning. Check out the library of free eLearning lessons at [The Food Education Center](https://www.pilotlight.org/).



Equipment Grant Deadline Reminder: Apply By April 2

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service provides funding to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to provide equipment assistance through competitive grants to School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). ISBE has been allocated \$1,087,539 to award grants to SFAs in this round of funding.

ISBE is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for SFAs to apply on behalf of their NSLP schools for grant funding. SFAs can request funds to replace, renovate, or purchase new kitchen equipment that is needed to serve healthier school meals, improve food safety, and/or expand access to school meals.

In regard to School Year 2020-21, any SFA with a previously approved state agency agreement on file to operate the National School Lunch Program (per 7 CFR 210.9(b)), and that would otherwise be operating NSLP in SY 2020-21, may continue to access NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants while utilizing the flexibilities granted under the current Summer

Food Service Program/Seamless Summer Option Nationwide Waiver.

All SFAs meeting the above criteria are eligible to apply, but priority will be given in the following areas (based on prior school year data where applicable): schools where 50

percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; schools that have not previously received a NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant within the last five years; schools that also participate

in the School Breakfast Program; and schools that prepare meals on site using district-owned equipment or, through this grant, will be able to start preparing meals on site without a school-to-school agreement or vended or food service management contract.

For full details, see the Notice of Funding Opportunity and information on how to apply posted on the [NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant webpage](#). **The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. April 2, 2021.**

If you have any questions regarding this funding opportunity, contact Emily Durbin at edurbin@isbe.net.



Sign Up for Our Wellness Conference

The Illinois State Board of Education is excited to announce that registration is under way for the second annual [School Wellness Conference](#). The ISBE Nutrition, Wellness, and Student Care departments are teaming up to present nine live webinars on April 14 and 15.

The conference will feature live webinars, on-demand trainings, and an exhibitor section on the webpage. Of particular interest for school nutrition professionals are two live presentations by ISBE Nutrition Department staff:

Dietary Guidelines for Americans & the Connection to School Nutrition:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently released the 2020-2025 Edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Learn about the current recommendations and how they are incorporated in school nutrition. 1:30-2:15 p.m. Wednesday, April 14. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



ISBE Nutrition Department staff will present two live webinars on April 14.

Wednesday, April 14. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Visit <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School->

Save the Dates! School Nutrition Programs Back to School Conference Set for July 19-20

The ISBE Nutrition Department will host its annual **School Nutrition Programs Back to School Conference** on July 19-20. The virtual conference will feature live webinars, on-demand trainings, and exhibitor resources. Watch for more details coming soon at www.isbe.net/snpb2s.

Promoting Year-Round Meals: The Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program help provide children access to meals year-round outside of their normal school hours. Learn about the similarities and differences of each program, as well as how to make the transition to potentially facilitate both programs. 2:30-3:30 p.m.

[Wellness-Conference.aspx](#) for a complete list of ISBE School Wellness Conference live webinars. Click the individual session links to read the description and to register.

Professional Standards for all School Nutrition Programs Employees: Please note that while we encourage attendance for any session, training must be job-specific and intended to help employees perform their duties well to satisfy the requirements for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Professional Standards for All School Nutrition Programs Employees](#). For more details, including hours required and documentation, consult our [Professional Standards fact sheet](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the ISBE Nutrition Department at cnp@isbe.net.

New Contract Renewal Forms Sent to Sponsors

This reminder is for sponsors who currently have a food service management company (FSMC) contract or vendor meals contract that contains the option to renew the existing contract at least one more year. If you are conducting a new procurement instead of renewing your contract or you do not have such type of contract you may disregard this notice.

The Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Department recently emailed the required Contract Renewal Agreement Form and instructions directly to the Authorized Representative listed

in the Web-Based Illinois Nutrition System (WINS). If you have not received the form, please contact Christina Smith at nutritionprocurement@isbe.net to obtain a copy. Please do not use old renewal forms.

All contracts must be renewed prior to their expiration, generally June 30 or July 31, 2021. Please submit your Contract Renewal Agreement Form along with all required documentation to nutritionprocurement@isbe.net prior to the current contract expiration.

USDA Extends Flexibilities Through the Summer

On Tuesday, March 9, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the nationwide extension of several waivers that allow all children to continue to receive nutritious meals this summer when schools are out of session.

They include key flexibilities allowing non-congregate feeding, parent/guardian meal pickup, and flexible meal service times. These flexibilities are now available through Sept. 30, 2021. The waivers were previously extended only through June 30, 2021.

No action is required by sponsors at this time. The Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Department will be reaching out to sponsors soon to determine end dates for School Year 2020-21 and operation plans for this summer.



Waiver Extensions

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service's [Child Nutrition Waiver Update](#) summarizes the new flexibilities for summer 2021 operations for the Summer Food Service Program, the National School Lunch Program, and the NSLP Seamless Summer Option. For more details, here are the new extensions:

- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibilities for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Non-Congregate Feeding for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Extend Area Eligibility Waivers for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver of Meal Service Time Restrictions for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Offer Versus Serve Flexibilities in the Summer Food Service Program for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Area Eligibility for Closed Enrolled Sites for Summer 2021 Operations](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Waive First Week Site Visits in the Summer Food Service Program for Summer 2021 Operations](#)

Celebrate Nutrition Champions!

It has no doubt been a very challenging school year with the pandemic, and school nutrition professionals across Illinois are doing extraordinary work to ensure children maintain access to meals whether they are learning in-person, remote, or with a hybrid school.

Help us celebrate school nutrition champions by submitting photographs of your socially distanced staff hard at work or posing for a snapshot. The ISBE Nutrition Department would like to update our School Nutrition and Wellness

Champions webpage and feature submitted photos in a special issue of The Outlook. Please include caption information, including your district name, staff names, and other fun facts for the photo caption.

Send photos and cutline information to Tim Murphy at tmurphy@isbe.net. For larger and/or multiple files you can use the [ISBE Attachment Manager](#).



Illinois Sweep Procedure

School Year 2020-21 Diversion to Processor Pounds

For those schools that diverted pounds to processors during School Year 2020-21, please use all pounds by June 30, 2021. Pounds remaining in school accounts on June 30, 2021 will be swept to the State of Illinois account.

Please check [ProcessorLink](#) and [K12](#) to review your pound balances, and determine how you can use the pounds prior to June 30.

Illinois' full sweep procedure is included in the box accompanying this article and is also available in the [School Nutrition Programs Administrative Handbook](#) (Page O-10).

As a reminder, ISBE offered two opportunities for schools to reduce diversions to processors during SY 20-21, as a result of the pandemic and to provide flexibility and maximization of Food Distribution Program funds. When diversions were reduced, funds were then able to be used for USDA Foods and/or DOD.

Also, please know that consideration was given to extending the sweep date due to the continuing pandemic; however, program funds can be better managed by maintaining the June 30 date. Please do not view the sweep as punitive. The state will gladly provide available state account pounds to any school district that can use them.

If you have questions, please contact Paula Williams at pawillia@isbe.net.

Illinois State Board of Education, Food Distribution Program

Excess Inventory at Processors

7 CFR 250.30(n) requires the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to monitor processor inventories to ensure that the quantity of donated foods for which the processor is accountable is the lowest cost-efficient level but may not exceed a six month supply based on the processor's average monthly usage. To ensure this requirement is met, ISBE enforces the following procedures:

- USDA Foods diverted to processors must be used by June 30 of the year in which the pounds were diverted. For example, if pounds were diverted for school year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021), the pounds must be used by June 30, 2021.
- Pounds not used by June 30 will be removed from a School Food Authority's (SFA) account and transferred to the State of Illinois account.
- Usage is monitored throughout the school year. If a SFA's account exceeds a six month supply based on the SFA's average monthly usage, pounds will be transferred to the State of Illinois account.
- Inventory in the State of Illinois account will be available on a first come first served basis.
- SFAs may contact processors/brokers on an individual basis to request pounds from the State of Illinois account. SFAs requesting pounds should be familiar with USDA Foods processing procedures and end product distribution.
- SFAs losing pounds will not receive a credit, and SFAs gaining the pounds will not be charged.

SY 21-22 Application Available Soon for CEP

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) application is open from April 1 to June 30. The Online CEP Evaluation and Application Module will be available to all sponsors as of April 1 via the Web-Based Illinois Nutrition System.

For more information, [visit the Illinois State Board of Education's CEP webpage](#) or review [Section P](#) of the [School Nutrition Programs Administrative Handbook](#). Questions can be directed to the ISBE Nutrition Department at cnp@isbe.net.



**Illinois State
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Events, Meetings, and Deadlines

- **April 2** – Deadline to Apply for [NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants](#)
- **April 14-15** – [ISBE School Wellness Conference](#)
- **April 14** – [“Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Connection to School Nutrition”](#) webinar (Part of the ISBE School Wellness Conference)
- **April 14** – [“Promoting Year-Round Meals”](#) webinar (Part of the ISBE School Wellness Conference)

Please note this is not a complete list of Nutrition Department events, meetings, and deadlines. Visit us online at www.isbe.net/nutrition.

What's New?

- [Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools \(FAQs\)](#)
- [USDA Extends Flexibilities Through Summer](#)
- [USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service Recalls & Public Health Alerts](#)
- [Sign Up for ISBE E-Mails](#)
- [View Free “LEAD to School” Training](#) (Funded by the USDA and available to SNA members and non-members)

Watch for our latest news and posts under What's New? at www.isbe.net/nutrition.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

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