



# THE OUTLOOK

A Monthly Newsletter for School Nutrition Programs

# SAVE THE DATES!



## ISBE School Wellness Conference Scheduled for April 14-15

**T**he Illinois State Board of Education will present its second annual School Wellness Conference on April 14 and 15.

This year's conference will be presented virtually by the ISBE [Nutrition](#), [Wellness](#), and [Student Care](#) departments. The conference will feature live webinars, recorded trainings, and exhibitor resources.

School nutrition professionals, physical education teachers, school nurses, school social workers, and others dedicated to the well-being of Illinois schoolchildren are encouraged to utilize these free resources. Watch for registration and more information coming soon on the [ISBE School Wellness Conference webpage](#) and in the [ISBE Weekly Message](#).

# NEWS BRIEFS

## NUTRITION RESEARCH

The CDC recently released a research brief titled “School Nutrition Policies and Practices Can Support the Social and Emotional Climate and Learning.” [Take a look online.](#)

The new research brief includes a description of the social and emotional learning (SEL) core competencies and provides examples of school nutrition policies and practices that reflect each competency. This information makes it easy for school leaders to focus on policies specific to their needs and setting.

## CACFP TRAINING

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will host a Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Trainers’ Circle Webinar on “Training Program Operators to Use Grains Ounce Equivalents.”



The USDA Team Nutrition initiative webinar is set for 1:30 p.m. CT on Feb. 10. Registration for this free webinar is available via the Team Nutrition website: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/trainers-circle-cacfp-webinars>. A recording will be posted on the website.

## WINTER PRODUCE

Looking for ideas to keep your plate colorful and flavorful these days? Check out the [winter produce guide](#), where you'll find tips and info on all of the fruits and veggies that are in season and abundant right now. It includes recipes and teaching tools.



# Keep Up With What's New?

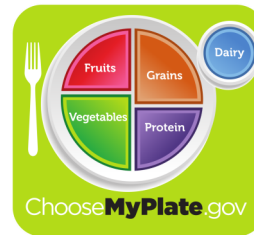
**B**ookmark [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition) for the latest news, including food recalls and public health alerts from the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service. The most recent recall was for [Ready-to-Eat Dip and Salad Products Shipped to Retail Locations in Illinois](#).

Other What’s New? items include a [Feb. 19 webinar on P-EBT](#) and ISBE’s [Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer \(P-EBT\) webpage](#).

Other recent announcements include the [No Kid Hungry School Meals Marketing Toolkit](#) and a recording of our [Local Wellness Policies webinar](#).

# Explore MyPlate For Yourself

**T**he U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently released the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#) – our nation’s leading nutrition advice to help all Americans lead healthier lives.



with new digital tools and resources! Start Simple with MyPlate offers free, personalized resources based on each individual’s eating needs and habits.

MyPlate is here to help families put the Dietary Guidelines into action

Explore [MyPlate’s new website](#) – MyPlate.gov – where you can find tips, tools, and recipes that will fit your healthy eating needs. The benefits of healthy eating add up over time, bite by bite. Small changes matter.

# USDA Updates Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool

**T**he U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Team Nutrition just released updates to the [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool](#) (PSTTT) based on user feedback.

Users logging in training for themselves will now see “My Training History” and “Print My Certificate” under the Welcome menu, making these features easier to access. Additionally, school directors will have

the ability to add a new district if their district is not currently listed in the PSTTT, as well as the ability to edit information (i.e., district name, county, zip) using “Manage School Districts” found under the Employees menu.

Track your required annual training hours today using USDA’s free [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool](#)!

# Additional DOD Funds Available

**T**he state has additional DOD funds available now for school districts participating in the Food Distribution Program. To request funds, please follow the procedures below:

1. Please spend your allotted DOD funds before requesting additional funds.
2. Email Paula Williams at [pawillia@isbe.net](mailto:pawillia@isbe.net) to request additional funds.
3. Additional funds may be added in maximum increments of 20% of your SY 20-21 Beginning PAL Balance. For example, if your Beginning PAL Balance was \$20,000, you can request up to \$4,000.
4. If you use all additional funds, you can request more

at that time, following this same process.

**This process is not replacing the DOD Free for All that generally begins each year in May.** The additional funds offered now are a result of the unusual circumstances surrounding the 2020-21 school year, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting changes to school meals. We still anticipate having a DOD Free for All towards the end of SY 20-21. The difference between this process and the DOD Free for All is that this process maintains individual school district budgets in FFAVORS, which in turn, requires school districts to make requests.

We hope you find these additional funds helpful in the operation of your Child Nutrition Programs. Questions can be directed to Paula Williams at [pawillia@isbe.net](mailto:pawillia@isbe.net).

## SY 21-22 USDA FDP Entitlement (PAL) Waiver

**O**n Jan. 15, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offered a Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) opt-in waiver for School Year 2021-22 National School Lunch Program Food Distribution Program entitlement (PAL) calculations. **Illinois has opted-in to the waiver.**

This waiver is a continuation of the School Year 2020-21 waiver, which was offered June 16, 2020, and for which Illinois opted-in. The waiver intends to minimize the impact of COVID-19 related school closures on USDA Foods entitlement.

Illinois' School Year 2020-21 reimbursable lunch counts under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) have been and are projected to continue being significantly lower than in years past, due to the fact that many school districts are operating the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) instead of NSLP, and the SFSP meals cannot be used to calculate USDA Foods entitlement.

Since Illinois has opted-in to the waiver, the following will occur:

- The SY 2020-2021 final assigned entitlement level will be carried forward and will be the basis for the preliminary SY 2021-2022 entitlement level which the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will assign to state agencies in January 2021. This means that preliminary SY 2021-2022 entitlement values will continue to be based on SY 2018-2019 lunch counts.
- Additionally, FNS will once again forego the annual entitlement reconciliation process in November 2021. This means that SY 2020-2021 entitlement will not be reconciled to actual SY 2020-2021 lunch counts and that the SY 2021-2022 final assigned entitlement value will continue to be based on SY 2018-2019 lunch counts.
- In November 2022, reconciliation will resume as normal. In other words, FNS would plan that SY 2021-2022 USDA Foods entitlement would be reconciled to actual SY 2021-2022

lunch counts and a corresponding positive or negative balance will be carried over into SY 22-2023 entitlement.

The Food Distribution Program Annual Order Period for school year 2021-22 is open. As a result of opting-in to the waiver, ISBE has updated the program year 2022 Beginning PAL Balances in ICS. **If you have already submitted a program year 2022 order, please revisit the order and make necessary changes. Below are the deadline dates for ordering:**

- Annual Order Opened Jan. 4
- Annual Order Closes March 8
- Diversion to Processor will close the week of Feb 22-28, so that ISBE can compile truck loads.
- Diversion to Processor will re-open for final changes March 1-8.

Please visit the ICS message board for additional details, instructions, and training resources. Questions can be directed to [fdp@isbe.net](mailto:fdp@isbe.net).

# 'Score Big With School Breakfast'

**N**ational School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is set for March 8-12, and this year's theme is "Score Big With School Breakfast." Here are some resources to help you get started and plan something special to celebrate nutritious meals and the incredible school nutrition professionals that make them happen.



Check out the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition for great [School Breakfast Program materials](#) to celebrate the special week. The Team Nutrition Popular [Events Idea Booklet](#) includes lots of ideas, including "[Start Your Day on the Right Foot,](#)" which encourages walking.



The [School Nutrition Association](#) has a wide variety of resources, including the [2021 NSBW Toolkit](#) and [NSBW activity sheets](#).

*We would love to know your plans for the special week. Email us at [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net).*

## Local Wellness Policy Webinar Recording Available

**I**n case you missed it, a recording of the ISBE Nutrition Department's "[Local Wellness Policies: Completing the Triennial Assessment](#)" webinar is available online. The webinar covered USDA's triennial assessment requirements as well as tools to assist with completing the assessment. A copy of the presentation is at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/lwp-triennialassessment.pdf>.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) requires all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program to complete a triennial assessment of their Local School Wellness Policy at least once every three years.

Previous guidance under the HHFKA required schools to complete their first triennial assessment by June 30, 2020. However, the U.S Department of Agriculture's [Nationwide Waiver of Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessments in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs](#) extended the deadline for LEAs to complete their first triennial assessment by June 30, 2021, for those that notified ISBE of their decision to opt-in to the waiver before the original deadline. Notifications of the deadline extension opportunity were sent to all sponsors.

For more information and resources on Local School Wellness Policies, please visit <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Local-School-Nutrition-Wellness-Policy.aspx>. Questions can be directed to Beth Tanner of the ISBE Nutrition De-



**Illinois State  
Board of Education  
Nutrition Department**

100 N. First St.  
Springfield, IL 62777  
Phone: (800) 545-7892  
Fax: (217) 524-6124  
Email: [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net)  
Web: [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net)

## Events, Meetings, and Deadlines

- **Feb. 10** – [CACFP Trainers' Circle Webinar: "Training Program Operators to Use Grains Ounce Equivalents"](#)
- **Feb. 12** – ISBE offices closed for Lincoln's Birthday
- **Feb. 15** – ISBE offices closed for Presidents Day
- **Feb. 19** – [P-EBT Basic Overview and Q&A webinar](#)

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

## What's New?

- [FOOD RECALL: Ready-Eat Dip and Salad Products Shipped to Retail Locations](#)
- [Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer webpage](#)
- [SY 2021-22 USDA FDP Entitlement \(PAL\) Waiver](#)
- [SFSP 2021 Claiming and Reimbursement Rates](#)
- [Updated Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [In Case You Missed It: ISBE's Virtual USDA Foods Show](#)
- [No Kid Hungry School Meals Marketing Toolkit](#)

Watch for our latest news and posts under What's New? at [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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