

# The OUTLOOK

## Nutrition Programs

Illinois State Board of Education

### Administration

#### Change in Illinois Free Rate

Effective January 1, 2008, the Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Program reimbursement rate will be \$.1100. The adjustment is based on an analysis of meals claimed and dollars disbursed to date. A final proration will be made in August 2008, to ensure all districts receive equitable funding for meals served.

#### State Agency Meeting With the United States Department of Agriculture and School Nutrition Association Recap

The last week of November 2007, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) staff was able to attend the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/state agency biennial conference, *In Tune With Child Nutrition* in Nashville, Tennessee. All states and territories were represented at this conference and a lot of sharing and networking was accomplished.

A few highlights from the conference include the following:

- The USDA released the key findings from the School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA)-III and Access, Participation, Eligibility, and Certification (APEC) study and Incorporating Dietary Guidelines Into School Meals

(continued on next page)

#### Important Dates

- February 1—School year 2009 Annual Commodity Order deadline
- February 1—On-Site Review completion deadline (keep on file at school)
- February 29—Submit a letter of intent for the *Move & Crunch Challenge for Principals* ([www.kidseatwell.org](http://www.kidseatwell.org))
- March 3–7—National School Breakfast Week, *Fuel Your Imagination* ([www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org))
- March 4–7—Legislative Action Conference, Washington, DC

#### February 2008 — The Outlook

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## State Agency Meeting (continued)

- Brainstorming is beginning at both the federal and state level for reauthorization 2009. Yes, that is what we said! The time has come again. A major focus will be to improve the nutrition integrity of the school meals and also certification issues but the word on the street is that proposals should remain cost neutral. Share your thoughts and ideas with us via email to [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) or telephone 800/545-7892.
- The USDA is partnering with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies to evaluate scientific based research to modify the current meal patterns for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. This process is expected to take a couple years. In the meantime, please review the updated guidance from USDA on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans included in this issue of *The Outlook*.
- Staff from the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) presented key research in the area of school health called the *School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS 2006)*. Information on this research is available on their website at [www.cdc.gov/shpps](http://www.cdc.gov/shpps).
- In closing, Stanley Garnett, Director of the Child Nutrition Programs Division in Washington, DC with the USDA, officially retired at the beginning of January 2008. After working with these programs for over 30 years and making such a difference, we wish Stan well in his retirement!

## Date Savers

May 6 Illinois School Wellness Conference, From A to Z, at the Decatur Conference Center, Decatur

## Access, Participation, Eligibility, and Certification Study— Erroneous Payments in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

**T**he Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 requires Federal agencies to report annually in the extent of erroneous payments in their programs. Therefore, the USDA is required to report this data on

the NSLP and SBP. This report, *Access, Participation, Eligibility, and Certification (APEC) Study*, provides the first reliable national estimates of erroneous payments made to school districts for the NSLP and SBP. These findings apply to SY2005–2006.

Program errors and the risk of erroneous payments in NSLP/SBP continue to be a concern. Slightly more than one in five students were certified inaccurately or erroneously denied benefits in SY2005–2006. New data estimates the gross cost of school meals erroneous payments due to certification error at about \$935 million while other operational errors represent about \$860 million. Most of the payment errors resulted from (1) household misreporting of income, (2) administrative errors by school districts in processing applications, and (3) errors by cashiers in counting reimbursable meals. *The US Department of Agriculture will use this new information to continue the extensive work underway, and step up its commitment to work with Congress and program partners to address these erroneous payments. Actions to reduce these errors must improve accuracy without compromising access for low-income families, must not unduly increase burden on schools, and must be cost effective.*

Erroneous payments due to certification error represented about \$759 million for NSLP and \$177 million for SBP during SY2005–2006. This represents 9.4 percent of \$8.06 billion in NSLP spending (cash reimbursements and commodity foods), and about 9.1 percent of the \$1.94 billion in SBP reimbursements in that year. More than three-quarters of certification related erroneous payments in both NSLP and SBP were overpayments. The net cost to the government (overpayments minus underpayments) of erroneous payments due to certification error was \$387 million for NSLP (5 percent of total NSLP spending) and \$97 million for SBP (5 percent of total SBP reimbursements).

Slightly more than one in five students were certified inaccurately or erroneously denied meal benefits. Among all certified students and denied applicants, 22 percent were certified in error, with 15 percent receiving an incorrect high benefit level (over certification) and 7 percent receiving an incorrect low benefit level (under certification).

The certification process was most accurate among students certified for free meals. Most students receiving free meals were certified correctly; 14 percent receiving free meals were over certified. Certification errors

were much more common among students certified for reduced-price meals, with about one-third under certified (receiving reduced-price meals but eligible for free meals) and one-fourth over certified (receiving reduced-price meals but not eligible for either free or reduced-price meals). The household circumstances of one-third of applicants denied both free and reduced-price meals suggested that they should have been certified, with about 17 percent eligible for reduced-price meals and 19 percent eligible for free meals. However, because few applications are denied, these errors represent a small proportion of all certification errors.

Errors by applicants in reporting their household circumstances (income and size) were substantially more common than administrative errors by schools. Household misreporting (23 percent of applicants) was nearly three times more likely than school district administrative error (8 percent of applicants). Among students with any certification error, 70 percent had household misreporting error alone, 11 percent had administrative error alone, and 19 percent had both types of errors. Household misreporting occurred for 15 percent of students certified for free meals, 57 percent for students certified for reduced-price meals, and 32 percent of denied applicants. Administrative error occurred for 6 percent of students certified for free meals, 14 percent of students certified for reduced-price meals, and 16 percent for denied applicants.

Erroneous payments (overpayments and underpayments) due to causes other than certification error represented \$555 million for NSLP (7 percent of total NSLP spending) and \$306 million for SBP (16 percent of SBP reimbursements). Cashier error (e.g., counting nonreimbursable meals as reimbursable) represented more than one-third of noncertification error in the NSLP and nearly two-thirds of noncertification error in the SBP. Erroneous payments from cashier error resulted primarily from very high levels of this error in a few schools; most schools had fairly low levels of cashier error. Aggregation errors (e.g., mistakes in adding up meal counts from individual points-of-sale, schools, or districts) accounted for the remaining non-certification error.

The net cost to the government of non-certification error was \$292 million for NSLP (4 percent of total NSLP reimbursements) and \$254 million for SBP (13 percent of SBP reimbursements). Erroneous payments in the school meal programs received extensive consideration in the development of the

Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265). The first-ever national estimate shows that these continue to be a problem, with SY2005–2006 certification error estimated at \$935 million and non-certification error estimated at \$860 million. However, there is no simple solution. Improving accuracy must not compromise access for low-income families since this would undermine the programs' goals and nutritional benefits. Placing additional requirements on schools may discourage some from participating in the future. Increasing accuracy will also likely be resource-intensive. The cost required to improve accuracy must not be greater than achieved savings. The report provides USDA with information that will support ongoing extensive efforts and facilitate increased action in cooperation with Congress and program partners to improve program accountability.

For more information about this study from the USDA, please visit their website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/CNP/cnp.htm>

## Claim Common Cent\$

Funding & Disbursement  
Services Division  
Phone: 217/782-5256  
Fax: 217/782-3910



### Has My Claim Been Processed? How Much Money Will I Receive?

1. After successful submittal of the site claim(s) **AND** sponsor claim for the month, it is possible to check the status of the processing of the claim. In ACES, pull up the sponsor claim for the month you are checking. If the claim status says *Approved*, the claim was successfully submitted to our office but has not been processed for payment/vouchered. If the claim status says *Processed*, it has been processed for payment/vouchered. Once a claim is vouchered, expect to receive the Federal funds within approximately five business days. (Release of State funds is currently experiencing delays in the Comptroller's Office).
2. To determine the amount of money to receive for the claim, open the *Claim Analysis Report* after your claim is processed. In ACES, pull up the *Sponsor Claim* and in the *Links* drop-down box, select *Claim Analysis* and the system will open



a report summarizing the claim and detailing the payment information. The voucher date and amounts will be summarized at the top of the report. If you desire, you may print the report for your files.

## Food Distribution

### Check Your Diversions to Processors

**P**rocessors who had enough schools order products from them will be awarded contracts this month. This means schools need to check and see if the processor they diverted commodities to will be awarded a contract. If the processor to which you diverted commodities IS getting a contract, you do not have to do anything. If the processor to which you diverted commodities is NOT getting a contract, you might want to switch the commodities to a processor who IS going to receive a contract. We will post a message on the Illinois Commodity System message board by February 8, 2008, listing which processors will be getting a contract and instructions on how to switch commodities. Schools will have until February 15, 2008, to switch their commodities. If a school does not switch their commodities, ISBE will zero out those pounds diverted to a processor NOT getting a contract.

### Storage of Commodities Over Summer Break

ISBE will no longer allow over-summer storage of prior year commodities at the Lanter warehouse. For example, we are currently in school year 2008. At the end of the 2008 school year, we will not allow 2007 school year commodities to be held in the warehouse. We are making this policy in an attempt to reduce/eliminate out of date commodities being shipped in the subsequent school year and to get the warehouse empty in case we have a new warehouse contractor for the next school year. If you have any 2007 commodities you will not use, please contact the Food Distribution Program as soon as possible so we can unallocate these items from you and allocate them to schools to use before the expiration date. You can find out what 2007 commodities you were allocated by looking at your most recent monthly commodity bulletin on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS).

Again, we need to hear from you quickly. If we do not receive notice to unallocate commodities, we will deliver these commodities to schools with the April 2008 delivery unless you have taken delivery prior to then. You can contact Food Distribution Program staff at 800/545-7892 or email [jflentje@isbe.net](mailto:jflentje@isbe.net). Please contact the Food Distribution Program soon to avoid unwanted commodities being delivered to your school.

## Food Service and Nutrition

### Crediting of Corn Meal and Corn Flour for the Grains/Bread Component

**T**o be credited as a grains/breads component for the Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches for all Child Nutrition Programs, grain products must be enriched or whole grain, or made from enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour.

Recently the U.S. Food and Drug Administration published draft guidance stating in part that “de-germinated and bolted corn meal should not be considered whole grain products because the germ or bran has been removed during processing.” These clarifications by the FDA of the standards of identify for *corn meal* and *corn flour* indicated these products should no longer be considered as whole grains for the Child Nutrition Programs.

Therefore, beginning July 1, 2008, to be credited toward meeting meal pattern requirements, corn must be labeled as . . .

1. *Whole* corn (or other *whole* corn designations, such as whole grain corn, whole ground corn, whole cornmeal, whole corn flour, etc.) or
2. *Enriched* corn (or other *enriched* corn designations, such as enriched yellow corn meal, enriched corn flour, enriched corn grits, etc.)

Child Nutrition Programs are encouraged to implement this requirement as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2008, to ensure students receive more nutritious grains/breads products.

## *Grants, Awards, and Honors*

### **School Food Authority Training Mini-Grants**

**C**ongratulations to the fifteen school food authorities (SFAs) who received SFA training mini-grants to support local wellness policy development and implementation as part of the 2006 USDA Wellness Policy grant. The mini-grant activities included:

- Purchase of nutritional analysis software
- Food service staff training (Nutrition Education That Works, online curriculum, Illinois Extension Service, NET's Illinois Schools Can! regional training, consulting dietitians)
- Exhibit of Body Walk at a health fair
- Development of Wellness Policy bags for school staff
- Attendance at the 2006 KidsFest Chicago
- Distribution of healthy snack and fast food brochures for students
- Attendance at Illinois Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (IAHPERD) annual conference
- Purchase of health curriculums

Grant recipients reported that 942 staff members were trained representing the 15 schools and a total student population of 20,511.

### **Bookmark Coordinated School Health Grant Resource Website**

Coordinated School Health in Washington State offers this useful website for grant listings and databases, and websites covering a variety of topics including funding strategies, grant writing resources, and much more. Bookmark the URL at [http://depts.washington.edu/waschool/data\\_tools/funding.html](http://depts.washington.edu/waschool/data_tools/funding.html) today!

## *Training, Tips, and Tools*

### **Attend the Illinois School Wellness Conference, From A–Z**

May 6, 2008

**T**he Illinois State Board of Education, Divisions of Nutrition Programs and Curriculum and

Instruction in cooperation with Action for Healthy Kids–Illinois are sponsoring a one-day wellness conference highlighting successful implementation of school wellness programs involving nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity, and physical education. In addition, to meet Public Act 094-0190's School Health Recognition Program, the conference will recognize and celebrate schools having success with their wellness efforts. Browse an exhibit room for free resources, ideas, and networking. **SAVE THE DATE** of Tuesday, May 6, 2008, at the Decatur Conference Center in Decatur. Online preregistration is required at [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition). A registration fee of \$25 includes lunch, refreshments, and materials.

### **School Food Safety Plan, Process Approach to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Workshop**

The Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act of 2004 amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act by requiring school food authorities (SFAs) to implement a food safety program for the preparation and service of school meals served to children in the school year beginning July 1, 2005. The food safety program must be based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles and conform to guidance issued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). All SFAs were required to have a fully implemented food safety program that complies with HACCP principles no later than the end of the 2005–2006 school year.

To help ensure schools meet the food safety plan requirement, the Illinois State Board of Education has developed a workshop: School Food Safety Plan, Process Approach to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). Participants of this workshop will be introduced to the Process Approach to HACCP, which allows for a more practical application of food safety procedures. Participants will also work with hands-on activities they can take back to their schools and immediately use in the development of a food safety plan or revision of a current food safety plan.

The next set of School Food Safety Plan workshops will begin in the late spring/early summer of 2008. If you are interested in attending one of these informative workshops in preparation for the 2008–2009 school year, check our website (<http://www>).

isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm) this spring for dates, locations, and to pre-register.

## Basic Training Administrative Workshops

Basic Training administrative workshops are ideal for new school food service and administrative staff members, and also allow veteran school staff a refresher course on the National School Lunch Program. ISBE is currently in the process of planning Basic Training workshops for this coming summer. Our tentative schedule for these workshops is as follows:

July	16	Schaumburg
	17	Tinley Park
	30	Effingham
	31	Fairview Heights
August	6	Oak Lawn
	7	Bolingbrook
	13	Galesburg
	14	Bloomington
September	4	Springfield

For more information on the Basic Training workshops, dates, locations, and to preregister, please check ISBE's website (<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm>) later this spring.

## Calendar of Events—MARCH

- National Nutrition Month® *Nutrition: It's a Matter of Fact*  
Complete the Meal Count Edit prior to submission of the Claim for Reimbursement  
Submit Claim for Reimbursement  
2–5 School Nutrition Association's Legislative Action Conference—Washington, DC  
3–7 National School Breakfast Week, *Fuel Your Imagination* ([www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org))  
5 SFSP New Sponsor and New Staff Training—Fairview Heights  
6 NSLP Seamless Summer Option Sponsor Training—Fairview Heights  
6 SFSP Current Sponsor Orientation—Fairview Heights  
16–22 National Agriculture Week  
19 SFSP New Sponsor and New Staff Training—Alsip  
25 SFSP New Sponsor and New Staff Training—Moline  
26 SFSP New Sponsor and New Staff Training—Morton  
27 NSLP Seamless Summer Option Sponsor Training—Morton  
27 SFSP Current Sponsor Orientation—Morton  
13–20 Make changes, if needed, for April commodity

## PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH

- ... your administrator
- ... your food service staff
- ... your educators
- ... your local wellness policy committee



## Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
[www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net)

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