

THE OUTLOOK

Your Guide to School-Based Child Nutrition Programs

Administrative Alerts

ALERT!! New NSLP/SBP Meal Standards Just Released!

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the nutrition standards for school meals beginning with school year 2012-2013. The new standards were designed to align school meals with the most recent nutrition recommendations and current capabilities of schools. The USDA currently has a number of resources available for schools to utilize to help them prepare for changes that are to be put into place for 2012-2013. The resources include:

- Final Rule: Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- School Meals Sample Menus
- New Meal Patterns and Dietary Specifications Chart
- Implementation Timeline
- Policy Memo SP 10-2012: Questions and Answers on the Final Rule

To access these resources please visit the USDA's website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/nutritionstandards.htm>. As more information becomes available the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will be posting updates, information, and additional resources to the Nutrition Programs website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm>. ISBE Nutrition Programs Division staff are available for assistance by calling 800-545-7892 or 217-782-2491.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization Updates

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296) brings about many important improvements to the Child Nutrition Programs, **including the recently released new meal pattern standards** (see above article). To assist schools with implementation, the Nutrition Programs Division at the Illinois State Board of Education continually updates a summary of the sections of this act that impact school-based programs at www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/hunger_free.htm (click on *School-Based Child Nutrition Programs*).

School Breakfast Program Mandate

The Childhood Hunger Relief Act (Public Act 096-0158) mandates that a school must provide a breakfast meal if it had 40 percent or more students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in the preceding school year. ISBE administers the federally-funded School Breakfast Program and the state-funded IL Free Breakfast Program to assist you in implementing a successful program and to supplement the cost of providing the program. Requests for exemptions from this mandate must be sent to your Regional Office of Education no later than Feb. 15 of each year. For additional information on this mandate, including how to determine which schools are mandated, go to www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/hb_756.htm.

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Assistance Required for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Households

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and under 7 C.F.R. 245.6(a)(2) of the National School Lunch program regulations, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have a responsibility to be aware of the language needs of Limited English Proficient (LEP) households and ensure these households have access to the same information other parents have in a manner they can easily understand.

LEAs are encouraged to include the food service department when planning outreach to LEP parents to ensure that all households served by the LEA are adequately notified about the Child Nutrition Programs. By taking the steps described below, LEAs can help ensure that low-income children whose parents or guardians' primary language is not English can get the school meals for which they are eligible.

Identify the primary language of households that might be eligible for free or reduced price school meals and communicate with households in that language. Most schools have a system in place to identify parents' primary language for communications regarding the child's education. LEAs can use information gained from using a Home Language Survey, which is conducted at enrollment to determine the dominant language in the home. As an alternative, LEAs could use USDA's Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) "I speak" (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/frp/lspeak.pdf>) to identify the appropriate language for communications regarding school meals. Several languages may be used in a community and it is important that all households be offered LEP services. Simply offering the most common alternative language is not sufficient.

Provide written translations. State agencies or LEAs may choose to develop written translations of their own materials (including applications submitted online) in the most prevalent languages of households in their district. If LEAs do not have their own translated application materials they must at a minimum make FNS' prototype translations available. Translations of the household eligibility applications into 33 languages are available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/frp/frp.process.htm>.

Provide oral interpretation services. For parents that speak less prevalent languages or who have limited literacy, LEAs should identify oral interpretation services available within the school that can be used to communicate with households about school meal benefits. Parents should not need to rely on family members (especially children) or friends as these people are not always competent to provide quality and accurate interpretations. LEAs are encouraged to also partner with other local resources, such as migrant or refugee assistance agencies, when available.

Assist with verification. State agencies and LEAs are expected to have a system in place to provide verification notices to each household in the primary language of the parents or guardians in the household, follow up with households that do not respond to the initial verification request, and provide oral assistance if the parent or guardian has difficulty understanding the written request. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) translations of prototype verification materials are available on the FNS web site.

Serve parents or guardians with limited literacy. While USDA's prototype materials are designed to be comprehensible to someone with low literacy, LEAs are expected to provide

assistance to any parent or guardian unable to read so that they can understand and complete the application, certification and verification process. The Federal government's guidelines for plain writing are available at <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/bigdoc/TOC.cfm>.

Include the required non-discrimination statement. Parents need to understand that they will be treated fairly if they apply for free or reduced price school meals. The letter to households or the application itself **must** include the non-discrimination statement that appears on USDA's prototype application:

Non-discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. "In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program – Program Overview and Grant Application Details for SY2012-2013

We are ready to kick-off the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) grant application process for School Year 2012-2013. Staff with the Nutrition Programs Division of the Illinois State Board of Education will present a webinar for National School Lunch Program sponsors that are interested in applying for the FFVP grant for school year 2012-2013 on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2011, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Reserve your webinar seat now at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/639443265>.

The webinar will provide an overview of the FFVP and details about the grant application. The webinar is highly recommended for all schools that would like to apply for the FFVP grant. There will be limited time for questions during the webinar. The FFVP grant application will be available online (http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/ffv_program.htm) in early February 2012. The deadline to apply for FFVP (School Year 2012-2013) is March 15, 2012.

Delay in State Reimbursement

Payments for the state-funded Illinois Free Lunch/Breakfast Program continue to be delayed in processing by the Comptroller's Office. Some State FY12 vouchers are over 120 days old. All State Fiscal Year 2011 (through June 2011) vouchers have been paid. If you feel you are missing some vouchers or cannot match payments back to the corresponding claim(s) please call our office for assistance. This does not affect Federal reimbursement for the National School Lunch/Breakfast/Milk Programs. Federal funds are being processed by the Comptroller within the normal timeframes of 2-4 days after we voucher. We will continue to voucher the Illinois Free Lunch/Breakfast programs on a regular basis with the Federal programs but be advised that delays in State payments will continue to occur for the foreseeable future. Please contact Sharon Hopson or Nicole Richards at (217) 782-5256 or via email at shopson@isbe.net or nrichard@isbe.net for any claim questions.

USDA Foods and Illinois Commodity System Webinar

A recording of the Dec. 15, 2011, webinar is available on the Food Distribution website at <http://www.isbe.net/business.htm>. The webinar is approximately 2 hours in length and focuses on the Illinois Commodity System, placing the annual commodity order, diversions to processors, Department of Defense (DOD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program, and additional monthly processes aimed at teaching better management of commodity entitlement.

Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetables – Unused Funds

ISBE and the Department of Defense (DOD) allow participation in the program to all schools that requested to participate subject to a \$500 allocation floor. ISBE allocated the money we could spend with DOD amongst all schools that selected 'yes' under Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on ICS. Recent reports from DOD indicate many schools that have money allocated to them have yet to place any orders for fresh fruits or vegetables. Schools can see how much money has been allocated to them by selecting Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on ICS. Those schools that have not spent any of the money allocated to them are advised to contact DOD at (215) 737-5573 to begin placing orders or risk having the money used by other schools participating in the program.

As in previous years, we anticipate there will be unused funds available for use by schools participating in the program beginning sometime in March 2012. Funds will be available until the state as a whole runs out of money. For more information on DOD's Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, go to <http://www.isbe.net/business.htm>.

SY13 Planned Assistance Level (PAL) Factor for Commodities

The PAL factor for SY13 has been set at \$.24 per meal claimed in the National School Lunch Program for SY11. This is a decrease of \$.02 from the SY12 PAL factor. The decrease is due to a surplus from SY11 that was spent in SY12. For further information on PAL, contact Food Distribution staff at (800) 545-7892.



St. Mary's Grade School Rises to the Challenge!

St. Mary's Grade School in Sterling was awarded a \$3,500 USDA Team Nutrition mini-grant from the Illinois NET Program to improve the health and wellness of their school community and apply for the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC). The HUSSC is a USDA program that recognizes schools that have created a healthier school environment with healthy foods, nutrition education, physical education, and physical activity. With the full support of their school community, St. Mary's has taken these steps to ensure their students health.

Students participated in a Walk-a-thon to raise money and get physically active. They raised enough money to purchase "Dance Dance Revolution" and the AV equipment necessary to display it. The students and staff started a school garden in the spring with two raised garden beds and a storage shed. The garden has been a huge success. Families volunteered to maintain the garden over the summer and now the fresh produce is used in school meals, in taste testings, and donated to the local food bank.

The entire school staff has been trained on the CATCH program and it is now being used at all grade levels. At St. Mary's Nutrition Week, the students took part in a healthy poster contest, decorated MyPlate placemats and participated in games throughout the week in the cafeteria and gym classes. They also had an essay contest titled "Why I Can Be a Healthy Chef". The essay winners competed in an "Iron Chef" event at the end of the week at the Fit, Fun for Kids assembly for the whole school. They added a Health Section to their website that provides healthy living information for families and the community. They started a Mighty Milers Program – an in-school running program to get students active while having fun.

One of the barriers they initially encountered when starting their health and wellness initiatives was trepidation about increasing healthy options in the cafeteria decreasing the number of students who want to participate. But, after a few short months, parents are reporting that "healthy changes in their homes are being driven by the children". They are requesting fewer desserts and more of the healthy foods they are being exposed to at school. They have worked with very supportive community partners to support their goals. CGH Medical Center provided funding for the CATCH program. Congratulations to St. Mary's Grade School for being a shining example of student health and wellness in Illinois!

Professional Development

First Choice: A Procurement Training for School Food Service Training Announced

The Nutrition Programs Division of the Illinois State Board of Education is happy to announce a training opportunity related to general food service procurement planned for June 2012. Trainers with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) will be in Illinois to offer the 2½ day First Choice Procurement Training at two locations: June 5-7, 2012, in Springfield and June 12-14, 2012, in Joliet. Space is limited. Registration is available online at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscaendar/asp/eventlist.asp>.

The second edition of the "First Choice: A Purchasing Manual for School Food Service" (available online at <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=64>) will be used for this training. The second edition updates procurement information and integrates food safety information to assist purchaser in establishing procedures to assure receipt of a safe product. Procurement requirements will be explained including steps in purchasing, regulations, market place environment, product movement, bid units, specifications, brand approval, obtaining prices, monitoring cost, product testing, receiving and storage and purchasing cooperatives.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Produce Safety Resources – Great Resources for Meal Pattern Updates as well as FFVP Schools

Happy, Healthy New Year, 2012! The New Year and the new meal pattern for SY2012-2013 are upon us. As school personnel evaluate their current menus and begin to make changes, we wanted to share with you some valuable resources that are available regarding the safety of fresh produce. The resources include tips for specific produce, as well as traceability information, and overall food safety when using fresh fruits and vegetables in your schools. Resources are available online at www.nfsmi.org/producesafety. Be sure to scroll down through all of the valuable resources available.

Is Your School Interested in Taking the HealthierUS School Challenge?

Learn all you need to know to submit an award worthy HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSCC) application. Take away resources and success stories from Illinois schools that have successfully met the Challenge criteria.

SAVE THE DATE!

What: Step Up and Stand Out: Join the HealthierUS School Challenge Webinar

Who: The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program

When: Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012; 2-3 p.m.

Where: Watch from your computer!

How: Go to www.KidsEatWell.org for more information

The HealthierUS School Challenge is a voluntary initiative program from the USDA. The program recognizes schools that have created a healthier school environment with nutrition education, physical education, and physical activity. This project has been funded at least in part with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Illinois School Wellness Conference - May 3, 2012

We are pleased to announce the Fifth Annual Illinois School Wellness Conference will be held Thursday, May 3, 2012, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. Watch www.isbe.net/nutrition for details next month. Correction: The date of the conference indicated in the November 2011 Outlook is incorrect. The date was changed because of physical logistics.

Healthier Middle Schools: Everyone Can Help Toolkit

Attention Wellness Staff in Middle Schools! USDA Team Nutrition has released a series of communication tools, "Healthier Middle Schools: Everyone Can Help," to assist your efforts to provide healthy food choices and physical activity. Unique to the toolkit is an audience-tested video and print handouts for teachers, principals, parents, food service managers, and students. Print materials will be accessible online this spring. Visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/healthiermiddleschools.htm> to view the videos.

The Melting Pot

March is National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month is a campaign developed by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, which focuses on nutrition education, the importance of making informed food choices and making healthy eating and physical activity a priority. The theme for this year is "Get Your Plate in Shape."

Each year the Interagency Nutrition Education (INC) promotes National Nutrition Month through requesting nominations for those doing great things.

This year in going along with the "Get Your Plate in Shape" theme. See following article for more information.



**National Nutrition Month
Robin A. Orr Community
Partnership Award**



**Illinois
INTERAGENCY
NUTRITION
COUNCIL**

With the rates of overweight and fatness high, the Interagency Nutrition Council (INC) would like to hear about those that are doing great work to promote healthy lifestyles in your area. Our goal is to celebrate organizations/programs that work collaboratively to:

- Promote healthy eating
- Promote regular physical activity
- Mirror the mission of INC

The Illinois Interagency Nutrition Council (INC) promotes health and wellness through nutrition education, coordination of services and access to nutrition programs so that Illinois residents can achieve food security.

We would like to honor a variety of programs/activities that work with young pre-school aged children such as School Systems, Head Start/Child Care Programs, Community Programs and activities, and WIC Programs.

Poster Contest:

Please send us one photograph of the one poster per class/program that promotes MyPlate, physical activity and wellness. Along with a description of why the children think wellness is important and/or favorite foods and activities along with a short description of wellness education that is provided to children at your program. Limit the descriptions to one page total. Please include the following information:

- Name of the program
- Contact person name, email address and phone number
- Age of those served by your program

DUE DATE: Feb. 10, 2012

E-mail the photo of your poster and 1 page description and contact info to: Lindsay Blough at lblough@isbe.net



Rural Development's Community Facilities Program Offers Low-Interest loans and grants

ATTN: Communities serving populations of up to 20,000!

Did you know that the Rural Development Community Facilities (CF) program offers low-interest loans and grants for non-profit organizations, public bodies, and tribal organizations that may be used for community child nutrition facilities? Examples of approved uses of these funds include renovation of cafeterias and purchase of food preparation and storage equipment to improve access to healthy, locally, or regionally grown products, as well as implementation of garden programs. Please contact your local USDA Rural Development office for more information and visit http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF_CF.html.

New Farm to School (F2S) Webpage

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has developed a new F2S webpage filled with information related to procurement, resources, and success stories. The site can be viewed at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/farm_school.htm.

We are hearing more and more regarding F2S and wanted to assist schools with a central location for resources and information. The webpage provides regulatory information related to procurement requirements and geographic preference. Additionally, there are links to the National and IL Farm to School Organization pages, Ag in the Classroom, Know Your Food, Know Your Farmer, databases of available produce and your local county health department. F2S can mean many different things, from school gardens, to purchasing local foods for your lunches, to education in the classroom and we have a space on the page for success stories and we would love to hear about F2S at your district. Whether you are just getting started with small changes or you have been implementing F2S for years we would love to hear about all that you are doing and share that info with other schools through this page. We can all learn from each other and grow F2S in Illinois. Please send any questions or success stories to Lindsay Blough at lblough@isbe.net.



Calendar of Events—March 2012

National Nutrition Month®, “*Get Your Plate in Shape.*”
www.eatright.org/nnm/

Complete the Meal Count Edit prior to submission of the Claim for Reimbursement

- 1 Deadline for regional superintendent, if he/she received a request from a school to opt out of the Summer Food Service Program (Public Act 096-0734), to have conducted public hearing and to inform the school district, in writing, of his or her decision, along with the reasons why the exemption was granted or denied. Regional Superintendent must also provide listing to ISBE (at cnp@isbe.net) of all schools in their district that applied to *opt-out*, along with whether the exemption was *granted* or *denied*, and the reasons for the action.
- 5-9 National School Breakfast Week
- 8 National Agriculture Day <http://agday.org/>
- 10 Submit Claim for Reimbursement
- 13-20 Make changes, if needed, for April commodity orders
- 15 Deadline for regional superintendent, if he/she received a request from a school to opt out of the School Breakfast Program (Section 16d of Public Act 096-0158), to have conducted public hearing and to inform the school district, in writing, of his or her decision, along with the reasons why the exemption was granted or denied. Regional Superintendent must also provide listing to ISBE (at cnp@isbe.net) of all schools in their district that applied to *opt-out*, along with whether the exemption was *granted* or *denied*, and the reasons for the action.

Join *The Outlook* Newsletter List Serve

To receive monthly notices of *The Outlook* newsletter link, join *The Outlook* List Serve. Email: Outlook10-join@list.isbe.net and type only the e-mail address to be added in the message section. A confirmation will be sent to the e-mail address provided. School staff listed as the contact person on NSLP site and/or sponsor applications are already on *The Outlook* List Serve. For questions regarding *The Outlook* newsletter or list serve,

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