

# The OUTLOOK

## Nutrition Programs



bulletin board

### Illinois State Board of Education

#### Schools Help Hungry Children Through the Seamless Summer Option and the Summer Food Service Program

During the summer of 2009, the *Seamless Summer Option* saw a large increase in the number of schools and sites participating. Sponsoring districts increased 40 percent from 74 to 104 districts. More than 60 additional sites served meals through the *Seamless Summer Option*.

In addition, 39 school districts participated as sponsors in the *Summer Food Service Program*. Together, a total of 143 school districts throughout Illinois served breakfast and/or lunch to children at over 700 sites.

Visit the links below for a listing of schools that participated:

- [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/seamless\\_summer.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/seamless_summer.htm)
- <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm>

#### Change in USDA Policy: SNAP/TANF Eligibility Extended to ALL Children in a Household More information coming soon!

The USDA recently changed its policy extending Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) eligibility to children within the same household. The policy memo from the USDA is currently posted on our website at [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition) under *What's New?* Staff is currently working on additional guidance and a sample form for this purpose. This information will be posted as soon as possible.

#### Important Dates

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Sponsor and Site Applications Available through IWAS Are Due September 15.

- Labor Day—September 7, ISBE office closed
- National School Lunch Week—October 12–16, *All-Star School Lunch*
- Taste Test—November 4, Bloomington

#### SEPTEMBER 2009 — THE OUTLOOK

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# Administration

## Verification Process Requirements

Verification is the confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). By November 15 each year, each local educational agency (LEA) must select and verify a sample from applications approved for benefits on-file as of October 1. The verification process is a requirement for LEAs participating in the NSLP and/or SBP.

### Verification Timeline

- October 1—Count number of *approved applications* by category on file and begin verification process.
- Last operating day of October—Count number of *ALL free and reduced-price eligible students* by category. This information will be needed to complete the Verification Summary Report.
- November 15—Ensure verification process complete.
- December 15—Submit Verification Summary Report.

For questions or guidance on the verification process, please call 800/545-7892 or visit our website at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/verification\\_process.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/verification_process.pdf).

## IMPORTANT NEW LEGISLATION: Free Meals and School Fee Waivers

Under Illinois law, school districts are required to waive charges for textbooks and other fees for children whose families are unable to afford them, including children eligible for the federal free lunch and breakfast program, and for any other extenuating circumstances for which the school board will waive fees as communicated in its adopted policy (e.g., reduced-price lunch or medical emergencies). [105 ILCS 5/10-20.13 and 34-21.6]

Currently, a school district is obligated to waive at least the cost of textbooks and instructional materials for any student whose family income is within the federally established guidelines for free meals, regardless of the student's participation in the federal meals program (i.e., National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Special Milk or After-School Snacks). In addition, the district cannot verify the eligibility to receive a school fee waiver of a student who is receiving free meals outside of the verification requirements established for the federal meals program.

Effective September 1, 2009, however, school districts

that establish a process for requesting school fee waivers that is separate and apart from the application process for the federal meals program will be able to verify eligibility for a fee waiver independently (see Public Act 96-0360 at <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0360&print=true&write=>).

The law amends Sections 10-20.13 and 34-21.6 to provide two application options for verification purposes:

- Option 1: Use of a student's application for free meals under the federal program as the basis for granting a school fee waiver; or
- Option 2: Establishment of a separate application process to determine a student's eligibility for school fee waivers based upon the income guidelines established by the federal meals program that does not rely on a student's application for, eligibility for or participation in the free meals program.

Under Option 1, a school board that participates in a federally funded, school-based child nutrition program and uses a student's application for that program as the basis for waiving fees must follow the federal requirements for verifying a student's eligibility for both the meals program and waiver of school fees. This means that if a child is eligible for free meals, his or her school fees are automatically waived based on the meals application; however, federal requirements restrict the school district to verifying only 3% of the approved meal applications on file as of October 1, unless it has established just cause. No further verification of the student's eligibility for the fee waiver can be made. A child who is "directly certified" (i.e., is receiving SNAP/Food Stamps or TANF) or is "categorically eligible" (i.e., is homeless, migrant or runaway or in Head Start) would automatically receive school fee waivers as well under this option and would likewise have his or her receipt of free meals and a school fee waiver subject to the federal verification limitations.

It should be noted that a school board that chooses to use the federal meals application as the basis for granting school fee waivers also must have a school fee waiver application available for families who wish to apply only for the fee waiver and not the free meals program. Verification of school fee waiver eligibility for any student not applying for the federal meals program may be conducted in accordance with Option 2 below.

Under Option 2, a school board must establish an application process for determining and verifying eligibility for school fee waivers that is completely independent from the process for determining and verifying eligibility for free meals. While a student would still qualify to have his

or her school fees waived based on the federal income guidelines, the granting of school fee waivers could not be made based on the student's application for free and reduced price meals. The new state law relieves a district using a separate application process for fee waivers from the verification thresholds set by the federal program. With use of a separate application, a school district may verify a student's eligibility for a school fee waiver no more often than every 60 calendar days. If information obtained during the school fee waiver verification process determines that the student's family income is not within the federal income guidelines for free meals, then the fee waiver can be denied. However, the school district cannot use the information received under this process to deny a student's participation in the free meals program. A discrepancy between the school fee waiver application and the free meal application is not sufficient evidence ("just cause") to allow a school district to verify the meal application. In other words, a district cannot verify the meal application based on information obtained through verification of a fee waiver. It is important to note, however, that a child who is "directly certified" (i.e., is receiving SNAP/Food Stamps or TANF) or is "categorically eligible" (i.e., is homeless, migrant or runaway or in Head Start) would automatically receive school fee waivers as well under this option and would likewise have his or her receipt of free meals and a school fee waiver subject to the federal verification limitations.

Although state law does not require school districts to waive fees for students receiving reduced-price meals, school districts that choose to do so are subject to the restrictions outlined under each application option above.

**Questions about the processing or verification of federal meal program applications?** Visit [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/sbn\\_admin\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/sbn_admin_handbook.pdf) or contact Nutrition Programs Division at 800/545-7892 or [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net).

**Questions about fee waivers?**  
Contact the Rules and Waivers Division at 217/782-5270.

## School Breakfast Incentives

The fiscal year (FY) 2010 budget has been signed; however, it includes a significant reduction in funding. It was a difficult decision as to what educational programs, including School Breakfast Program Incentives, would be reduced or eliminated.

It was determined that School Breakfast Incentives fund-

ing, which is comprised of three incentives, would be cut by 50 percent from \$723,500 to \$361,800. With this amount, we will continue to fund as many School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grants (\$3,500 per site) as possible and will continue to fund the Additional 10¢ Reimbursement Incentive. The Additional 10¢ Reimbursement will be paid only in the fourth quarter of FY2010 and payments will most likely be pro-rated to fairly distribute the funds to those eligible statewide. More information on these incentives is available at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/bfast\\_faq.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/bfast_faq.pdf).

With the passage of SB 1957 (Public Act 96-0158), the third incentive, Universal School Breakfast Incentive, has been replaced with the Non-Traditional Breakfast Incentive effective July 1, 2009. Recognizing there are barriers to implementing breakfast in a traditional setting such as a cafeteria, this incentive will make grants available to school boards to offer the School Breakfast Program in a non-traditional setting or using non-traditional methods. Priority will be given to schools that are on the Early Academic Warning List. However, with the cuts to this year's budget, the Non-Traditional Breakfast Incentive will not be made available in FY2010.

Aside from these breakfast incentives, you are still eligible for federal reimbursements for meals served if you participate in the School Breakfast Program. These rates are available at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/school\\_reimbursement.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/school_reimbursement.pdf).

Many difficult decisions had to be made and we appreciate your commitment to serving breakfast. If you have additional questions, please contact Shawn Rotherham in the Nutrition Programs Division at 800/545-7892.



### Claim Common Cents

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

As you start submitting Claims for Reimbursement for the 2009–2010 school year, please remember the programs and claims run on a federal fiscal year of October through September. This means September and prior claims are **fiscal year (FY) 2009** and October and after claims are FY2010. Be sure you select the correct *Program Year* when filing claims online.

If the status of the site claim says *consolidated* or there are numbers already filled-in on the claim, it is likely you are in the wrong fiscal year. Double-check the *Program*

Year field on the gold bar on the left side of the screen.

If a site claim is not available for a certain month or fields are missing from the claim screen for a program the site participates in, you need to update the site application and make necessary changes.

Reminder: you **must** file separate Claims for Reimbursement for August and September; you cannot combine them.

If you have any claim questions, contact Carol Curto or Gladys Rothenberg in Funding & Disbursements at 217/782-5256.

## Food Distribution

### Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Funds

Again this year, the Department of Defense (DoD) allowed participation in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to all schools that requested to participate subject to a \$500 allocation floor. The Illinois State Board of Education allocated the money it could spend with DoD amongst all schools that selected *yes* under *Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation* on the *Annual Order Forms* menu option on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS). 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 the ICS.

Those schools that have funds allocated to them and do not have a login and password to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) are advised to contact DoD at 215/737-3676 to begin placing orders. Any other questions related to the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program can be addressed with Food Distribution Program staff at 217/782-2491.

### Total Commodity Value Received Posted on Food Distribution Program's Website

All schools are audited each year by their own independent auditors. Part of this audit includes the value of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities allocated to your school.

The needed information for commodities is easy to locate, and we suggest this information be given to the school

bookkeeper by the end of each school year. The information is available on the Food Distribution Program website at [www.isbe.net/business.htm](http://www.isbe.net/business.htm) under the *Total Value of Commodities Received by School* heading at the top of the page.

We ask that schools provide this information to auditors when requested.

### Changes in Planned Assistance Level

The Commodity Assistance rate for school year (SY) 2010 is. \$0.1950 per meal claimed in the National School Lunch Program. This rate is calculated using figures provided in the Producer Price Index published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. We refer to this as your Planned Assistance Level (PAL).

When you placed your annual order in January, the PAL factor on the ICS was \$0.1750. Your beginning balance has been updated to reflect the new rate. Due to this increase, please verify you are utilizing your full PAL. We recommend that your *Value of A PAL Requests* (what you requested in Group A commodities) be approximately 25–30 percent over your *Available for A PAL Requests* (value left after deducting values for Group B commodities, processing diversions, and DoD fresh fruits and vegetables from your beginning balance)—NOT YOUR *Beginning Balance*. If you have not ordered enough to utilize your full PAL; you can increase your requests on your annual order at this time.

### Reprocessed Commodity Taste Tests

Mark your calendars and come hungry for the annual Reprocessed commodity taste test. The Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA) is sponsoring the event planned for November 4, 2009, in Bloomington at the Parke Hotel and Conference Center. More information can be obtained on the ILSNA's website at <http://www.ilsna.net/> in the near future.

Taste tests are a great place to try different commodities to be offered for the 2011 school year. There is no cost and you do not have to divert commodities to a processor to attend. ISBE will give a brief presentation before the taste tests begin explaining the commodity divert process. Please plan on attending this information filled taste test.

# Food Service and Nutrition

## All-Star School Lunch, National School Lunch Week's Theme

October 12–16

The School Nutrition Association has provided all you need to plan, prepare, and celebrate National School Lunch Week (NSLW), October 12–16, 2009. Begin with a sample NSLW proclamation, logos, and press releases at [www.schoolnutrition.org/allstar](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/allstar). Plan now to join schools across the country to serve the special menu with recipes provided below. The elementary and secondary average nutrients per serving of NSLW meals are available at the website above. Bookmark it today! Honor and recognize your school nutrition staff's contributions to the school district. Best wishes for a successful NSLW!

### National School Lunch Week Menus

#### Team Monday—CP's Pizza

CP's Pizza  
Carrot Sticks With Low-Fat Ranch Dressing  
Kiwi Fruit  
Golden Sweet Potato Brownie  
Milk



#### Team Tuesday—Dwight's Quesadilla

Vegetable Quesadilla  
Mexicali Corn  
Green Apple Slices  
Milk



#### Team Wednesday—Vince's Veggies

Chef Salad With Turkey  
Strawberries  
Whole-Wheat Breadstick  
Milk



#### Team Thursday—Nash's Noodles

Chicken Parmesan With Whole-grain Pasta and Marinara Sauce  
Green Beans  
Fruit Salad  
Whole-Grain Garlic Roll  
Milk



#### Team Friday—Taurasi's Teriyaki

Beef and Vegetable Teriyaki Rice Bowl  
Orange Wedges  
Vegetarian Egg Roll  
Milk



Other suggested activities include a participation sweepstakes. Do not delay; start now to plan your NSLW celebration!

### Temperature, Not Color, Important Determinate of Ground Beef Safety *What You Need to Know About Safely Preparing Hamburgers*



Here is an annual reminder of the importance of taking temperatures and not relying on the internal color of hamburger patties.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) continues to advise consumers to use a meat thermometer when cooking hamburger and not rely on the internal color of the meat to be sure it is safe to eat. Visual testing for clear juices is no longer sufficient.

Research indicates some ground meat may prematurely brown before a safe internal temperature of 160°F has been reached. Also, some lean ground beef, or ground beef that contains approved seasonings or flavorings such as spices and spice extractives, may remain pink at temperatures well above the 160°F final cooking temperature recommended for consumers.

To accurately measure the internal temperature of a ground beef patty, a food preparer must insert the thermometer through the side of the patty to the center. For more information about this subject or other food safety articles, visit the FSIS website at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>.

## Grants, Awards, and Honors

### HealthierUS School Challenge Mini-Grants Available Pending Funding

Pending funding, the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program plans to award competitive grants of \$3,500 to 20 elementary schools to prepare for and take the HealthierUS School Challenge. The mini-grants can be used to purchase curriculum, student education materials, and support professional development for staff to meet the HealthierUS School Challenge criteria.

The HealthierUS School Challenge, a voluntary recognition program from the USDA, offers schools across the

nation an opportunity to be recognized for excellence in supporting student wellness. Last year, the first two Illinois schools—Ridgeview Elementary in Colfax and Bushnell-Prairie City Elementary in Bushnell—were recognized for their health-promoting school environments. You can be part of this elite group too!

For more information on the grant opportunity, visit [KidsEatWell.org](http://KidsEatWell.org) or call the Illinois NET Program at 800/466-7998.

## HealthierUS School Challenge Application Available Online

Now elementary schools applying for any one of the four HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) award levels may do so ONLINE. Go to the Food and Nutrition Services' Team Nutrition website at [www.teamnutrition.gov](http://www.teamnutrition.gov). The four levels are Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Gold Award of Distinction. Illinois presently has two Silver award level winners, Ridgeview County Unified School District 19's Ridgeview Elementary School, and Bushnell-Prairie City Community Unit School District 170's Bushnell-Prairie City Elementary School. The HUSSC promotes a healthier school environment by improving the quality of foods served in National School Lunch Program schools and providing students with nutrition and physical education, as well as physical activity opportunities. Consider applying for the HUSSC award this school year!

## Apply Now for Grants for School and Youth Gardens

Calling all green thumbs!! Do you have gardening advocates in your schools that would fulfill their dreams with a gardening grant or recognition award this year?

Then apply NOW at [www.kidsgardening.com/grants.asp](http://www.kidsgardening.com/grants.asp) for any and all of the following grants and awards.

- 2009 Hooked on Hydroponics Awards—Due September 18
- 2009 Hansen's Natural and Native School Garden Grant—Due September 25
- 2009 Healthy Sprouts Awards—Due October 17
- AeroGrow Growing Kids Awards— Due October 24
- 2010 Youth Garden Grants—Due November 2
- 2010 Heinz Wholesome Memories Intergenerational Garden Award—Due January 10, 2010
- 2010 Mantis Award—Due March 1, 2010.

## Training, Tips, and Tools

### New National School Lunch Program Purchasing Workshops

The Nutrition Programs Division is pleased to announce a new set of workshops focused on purchasing in the National School Lunch Program, *The Competitive Edge: Purchasing in the National School Lunch Program*. These half-day workshops are designed to assist schools and districts with the processes involved in establishing procurement procedures, developing solicitations/contracts, issuing solicitations for bids, and awarding contracts. Emphasis is placed on the State and Federal rules and regulations that govern the purchasing of foods and goods for School-Based Child Nutrition Programs.

Registration for the workshops listed below begins at 8:30 a.m. and the training is scheduled from 9 a.m.–noon. Complimentary beverages will be available, but no meals or snacks will be served. Pre-registration is required and must be completed online at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cns/calendar/asp/EventList.asp>.

There is no registration fee.

- September 17—Bloomington, Eastland Suites Hotel and Conference Center
- September 18—Schaumburg, Radisson Hotel
- September 25—O'Fallon, Hilton Garden Inn and The Regency Conference Center
- September 30—Springfield, Illinois Education Association Building

### Nutrition Programs Staff Busy With Training This Summer Guidance Posted Online

Between May and August, more than 20 workshops and the first two ever webinars were conducted statewide by Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Programs' staff. The trainings and numbers reached are listed below:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Certification of Eligibility and Verification                | 486 |
| • Menu Planning and Dietary Guidelines                         | 363 |
| • Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant (grantees only)      | 215 |
| • Illinois School Wellness From A to Z Conference              | 150 |
| • Electronic Direct Certification System Overview (2 Webinars) | 739 |

If you missed any of these trainings, most resources and

reference materials used are posted online at [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition). For example, the Administrative Handbook covering Basic Training workshops is located at [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition). Just scroll down to *Child Nutrition Programs* and select *NSLP—National School Lunch Program* (raspberry shaded box), and then click on *Administrative Handbook*, the first bullet item. Likewise, Electronic Direct Certification System resources, including the webinar, are available further down on the same page. Bookmark this link as a favorite for future use.

In addition, frequently check the *What's New* section of the website for information and workshop announcements. You can also email us at [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) or contact the office at 800/545-7892 or 217/782-2491.

## America Recycles Day



If you have never thought about connecting your food service operation with a recycling effort, America Recycles Day is a prime opportunity to bridge the two. Contact the school “green team” be it the janitor, an environmental advocate educator, the principal, a student group, and your school food service staff and brainstorm on ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle in your school community. Go to [www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org) for recycling 101; learn how to get involved, read press releases, and more. Celebrate the 12th year of America Recycles Day this November.

Another useful website is the Environmental Protection Agency. Go to [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov), and then under Resources, click on *Students and Educators*. Learn about the President’s Environmental Youth Awards (due December 31, 2009), grant opportunities, and materials commonly recycled.

## 2008–2009 The Outlook Index Posted

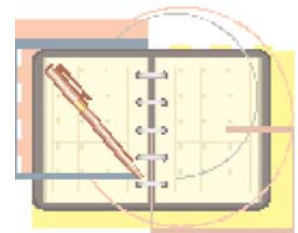
If you are looking for an article in a previous *The Outlook* issue, visit the posted *The Outlook* indexes to help you find it easier. Go to <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/newsletters.htm> and click on the year you desire. The articles are sorted alphabetically by topic area: Administration; Food Distribution; Food Service and Nutrition; Grants, Awards, and Honors; Training, Tips, and Tools; and Other.

## 2009–2010 Conference Schedule

The following list of conferences is provided to assist school food authorities in scheduling professional development for staff this school year. Please access the association’s website for further information; if no information is available, check back closer to the date of the event.

- September 12, 2009—Illinois Dietetic Association’s Fall Assembly, Sustainable Food Systems in Normal, Illinois (<http://www.eatrightillinois.org/emails/2009/save-the-date.htm>)
- October 17–20, 2009—American Dietetic Association’s Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo in Denver, Colorado ([www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org))
- November 4, 2009—Illinois School Nutrition Association’s Commodity Reprocessing Taste Test in Bloomington, Illinois ([www.ilsna.net](http://www.ilsna.net))
- January 10–12, 2010—School Nutrition Association’s Child Nutrition Industry Conference in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida ([www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org))
- February 28–March 3, 2010—School Nutrition Association’s Legislative Action Conference in Washington, DC ([www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org))
- May 4, 2010—Illinois School Wellness From  Conference in Decatur, Illinois ([www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition))
- June 22–24, 2010—Illinois School Nutrition Association’s 60th Annual Conference in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois ([www.ilsna.net](http://www.ilsna.net))
- July 11–14, 2010—School Nutrition Association’s Annual National Conference in Dallas, Texas ([www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org))
- July 24–27, 2010—Society for Nutrition Education Annual Conference, Reno-Tahoe, Nevada ([www.sne.org/conference/index.html](http://www.sne.org/conference/index.html))

Do not forget professional development opportunities are available online as well from the School Nutrition Association, National Foodservice Management Institute, and the National Restaurant Association. Visit [www.school-nutrition.org](http://www.school-nutrition.org), [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org), and [www.nraef.org](http://www.nraef.org) for further information.



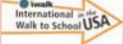

## Calendar of Events—OCTOBER

Complete the meal count edit prior to submission of the Claim for Reimbursement

Select verification sample size and begin confirmation and verification process

Begin On-Site Reviews (required for all multi-site sponsors) must be done annually-due February 11

Illinois Recycling Day

- 1 Record number of **approved applications** (by category) for the Verification Summary Report; select sample size and begin verification process
- 7 International Walk to School Day   
([www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org))
- 10 Submit September Claim for Reimbursement
- 12 Columbus Day—ISBE office closed 
- 12–16 National School Lunch Week—*All-Star School Lunch*
- 13–20 Make changes, if needed, for November commodity deliveries
- 16 World Food Day
- 17–20 American Dietetic Association's Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo—Denver, Colorado  
([www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org))
- 30 Record the number of **approved students** by ALL categories for the Verification Summary Report



## Illinois State Board of Education

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

**Pat Quinn**  
Governor

**Jesse H. Ruiz**  
Chairman

**Dr. Christopher Koch, Ed.D.**  
State Superintendent of Education



Share this newsletter link with staff in your school.  
[www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/newsletters.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/newsletters.htm)

[www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition)

Your link to the Child Nutrition Programs in Illinois