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School Nutrition Programs Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education



Indiana Department of Education sent this bulletin at 10/23/2024 04:00 PM EDT



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

School Nutrition Programs

This weekly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to providing education, training, and technical assistance opportunities to school nutrition professionals, helping to ensure seamless operations for those participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs. If you are the food service contact for your school or facility, please be certain that everyone on your team has access to this important information.

Tip of the Week

Professional Standards

All school nutrition program (SNP) staff are required to meet professional development training standards annually. Professional standards are intended to ensure that personnel are knowledgeable about key aspects of the SNPs and the duties of their positions. The school food authority (SFA) is required to train staff based on assigned job duties, level of job responsibility, and include training on specific topics each year.

Position	Required Training Hours
School Nutrition Director	12 hours
Managers	10 hours
Staff working more than 20 hours/week	Six hours
Staff working less than 20 hours/week	Four hours

SFA professional standard reminders:

- Track all staff training throughout the year. Any manual or electronic tracker is allowed or SFAs can use [IDOE's training tracker template](#).
- When conducting staff training, keep a dated agenda for each training that includes the name of the trainer, topics covered, a copy of any handouts provided, staff signatures, and the total time spent on the training. A training agenda template can be found [here](#).
- Non-food service staff with duties related to SNPs must receive annual training related to their responsibilities, including meal counting, free and reduced eligibility, offer vs serve, civil rights, etc. Though non-food service staff are not required to meet a specific number of annual training hours, training documentation must still be maintained.
- All professional standards training documentation will be reviewed by your field specialist during an administrative review.

Visit IDOE's [Professional Standards webpage](#) for more resources.

Important Updates

Photo Request for National School Lunch Week (NSLW) 2024

Share your fun ideas and promotions from NSLW! IDOE will compile a scrapbook with school submissions. Please submit your photos with the school name and description to [Margo Birk](#). Remember that photos of children's faces cannot be submitted without media release information on file.

USDA Updated Policy Guidance

On October 7, 2024, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released the following policy guidance to support school meal program operations following the publication of the final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans ([89 FR 31962](#), April 25, 2024):

- [SP 01-2025, Fluid Milk Requirements for School Meals](#)
 - [SP 02-2025, Substitution of Vegetables for Fruit Flexibility in the School Breakfast Program: Questions and Answers for Program Operators](#)
-

Annual Financial Report (AFR)

The 2024 AFR is due in CNPweb by **Friday, November 1**. Significant changes have been made to the AFR this year, and a weekly webinar series will walk through changes, required information, errors vs. warnings, helpful resources, and more. IDOE will also offer drop-in help sessions where School and Community Nutrition (SCN) Finance specialists are available to answer any questions. Webinar and drop-in session dates and times can be found below under "Training and Webinar Opportunities."

Review the [step-by-step AFR instructions](#) for more information on the report. Contact SCNFinance@doe.in.gov with questions and include your sponsor number in the subject line.

If you have a sensitive issue with your AFR and would like to request a one-on-one call, please email Ahollin@doe.in.gov directly to set up a call. Please include "AFR call requested" and your sponsor number in the subject line.

Farm to School

Grant Opportunity from Earth Charter

Have you been dreaming of how to make your school garden more sustainable? The Thriving Schools Challenge provides \$5,000 in grant funding for student led projects that emphasize the circular economy. Indiana public, charter, and non-public schools (K-12) are eligible to apply. Past projects include edible gardens, pollinator habitats, recycling, composting, food waste audits, and more! Learn more [here](#).

Funding Opportunity for Garden Projects

The SeedMoney Challenge is an annual crowdfunding challenge for school and community gardens across the U.S. If selected, the grants range from \$100 to \$1000, and the school receives 100% of the money they raise. Find more information [here](#). The application closes on Tuesday, November 12.

USDA Foods

Meat and Poultry Recall Does Not Involve Indiana Schools

On October 9, 2024, BrucePac recalled over 11 million pounds of ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products due to *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination. The RTE meat and poultry items were produced from May 31, 2024, to October 8, 2024, and bear establishment numbers "51205 or P-51205" inside or under the USDA mark of inspection.

A [preliminary list of schools](#) that received products that include BrucePac recalled RTE meat and poultry **does not show that any Indiana schools received recalled products.**

Additional information about this recall can be found [here](#).

Use Your USDA Foods

Schools must use their USDA Foods sitting at the state assigned warehouse, Dilgard Frozen Foods or Stanz-Troyers Foodservice and/or the processing companies in order to receive maximum benefit and reduce their school food budget. Non-use of USDA Foods can lead to food and funds loss, waste, improper inventory management, and excess inventory. USDA wants schools to use their USDA Foods in the year allocated. Remember to use carryover pounds first.

Remember to Receipt in FFAVORS

Schools should be receipting their Department of Defense (DoD) produce receipts into the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) within five calendar days after the produce delivery.

USDA Foods Recipes

Use your USDA [canned](#) or [frozen](#) corn for this variation of [Mexicali corn](#). This recipe must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



Training and Webinar Opportunities

Fall Culinary Skills for School Meals Webinar Series

Chef Cathy Powers and her team will be offering free, interactive culinary education for all K-12 school nutrition professionals. Virtual training is provided from 2 to 3 p.m. ET, featuring live chef demonstrations of practical recipes, efficient techniques, and important nutritional insights. Each class earns one continuing education unit (CEU) and includes great giveaways. Click the title of the sessions below to see more details and to register.

- Thursday, October 24 - [Knife Skills - Cutting Fruit](#)
- Thursday, October 31 - [Cooking Whole Grains - Techniques for Hot Dishes](#)
- Thursday, November 7 - [Cooking Whole Grains - Techniques for Chilled Dishes](#)
- Thursday, November 14 - [Super Simple Sauces](#)

Did you miss any of the previous Culinary Skills for School Meals Webinars from earlier this year? Click any of the links [here](#) to view the recording.

AFR Training

Significant changes have been made to the AFR this year, and a weekly webinar series will walk through changes, required information, errors vs. warnings, helpful resources, and much more. Note: these webinars are repeat sessions from previous AFR webinars conducted earlier this month.

Upcoming Webinars:

- Monday, October 28, at 1 p.m. ET. Register [here](#).

Drop-in help sessions will also be offered to answer questions and work through the AFR with a SCN Finance specialist. There will not be a presentation during drop-in help sessions. Join these sessions below:

Help Session Dates:

- Thursday, October 24, from 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. ET. Join [here](#).
- Tuesday, October 29, from 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. ET. Join [here](#).

Reminders

CNPweb Program Year 2025 Application

The August claim deadline of Wednesday, October 30, is quickly approaching. It is important to ensure approval of your application by this date. If your application is not yet approved, please make sure it is in "pending approval" status. Check your email inbox for any unanswered emails from IDOE staff regarding items that need correction for approval of the application. Reach out in the [CNPweb help form](#) with questions.

Traditional Verification Period Has Begun

Verification samples are based on the number of approved applications on file as of October 1 each year. Sponsors with a 20% or higher non-response rate the previous year are required to conduct standard (error-prone) verification. Review the [verification method spreadsheet](#) and find your school to see if this verification is required. Sponsors able to select any method can choose any of the three options, including error-prone verification.

View the presentation slides from IDOE's verification webinar series below:

- [Traditional Verification Methods](#)
- [Verification Preparation](#)
- [Direct Verification](#)
- [Verification Processing](#)

For additional tools and resources, review IDOE's [Verification & Direct Verification webpage](#).

*Sponsors that operate CEP corporation-wide and residential child care institutions that do not have day students are exempt from verification.

Updates from Our Partners

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards

Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) and USDA are recognizing and celebrating school food authorities (SFAs) who have made operational changes to improve the nutritional quality of their school meals, as well as those who engage students and families in nutrition education and school meals. If you've made changes to your school recipes and menus or engaged students in menu planning and nutrition education, you may qualify for a [Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award](#). AFHK has made the application process easier and faster. Awardees will receive national and local recognition, including a stipend to attend an exclusive national Healthy Meals Summit in Las Vegas.

Congratulations to North Lawrence Community School District in Bedford as a recent Recognition Award winner!

The Road to Successful Menu Planning for School Meals Training Series

Join Team Nutrition and the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) for free, live and recorded training on hot topics related to the Final Rule, "Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Pattern Consistent with 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans." The training series is designed to assist school food authorities, state agencies, and others in implementing the updated nutrition standards for school meals. Visit [here](#) to register for live training and view recorded training videos.

Lessons in Dairy: Hands-On Learning Experience for Sharing Dairy Nutrition and Farming

Join American Dairy Association Indiana on Wednesday, October 30, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET at Becks Agricultural Center in Lafayette for an event packed with fun and educational opportunities, including lunch, toolkits, and a tour of a local robotic dairy. More information and registration can be found [here](#).

Indiana School Nutrition Association (ISNA) 2024 Annual Conference

Register today for the 2024 ISNA Annual Conference! This year's conference will be held Wednesday, November 6, through Friday, November 8, at the Century Center in South Bend. ISNA has a great lineup of presenters and looks forward to reconnecting in person with colleagues from across the state. To view the agenda and register, visit the [ISNA conference website](#). Early bird registration ends Friday, September 20.

Upcoming Dates



Thursday, October 24, 11 to 11:30 a.m. ET	AFR help session
Thursday, October 24, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Culinary Skills for School Meals webinar series: Knife Skills - Cutting Fruit
Monday, October 28, at 1 p.m. ET	AFR training webinar
Tuesday, October 29, from 10 to 10:30 a.m. ET	AFR help session
Wednesday, October 30	August Claim Deadline
Wednesday, October 30, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET	Lessons in Dairy : Hands-on learning experience for sharing dairy nutrition and farming in Lafayette
Thursday, October 31, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Culinary Skills for School Meals webinar series: Cooking Whole Grains - Techniques for Hot Dishes
Friday, November 1	2024 AFR Due

Wednesday, November 6, through Friday, November 8	ISNA Annual Conference
Thursday, November 7, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Culinary Skills for School Meals webinar series: Cooking Whole Grains - Techniques for Chilled Dishes
Thursday, November 14, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET	Culinary Skills for School Meals webinar series: Super Simple Sauces

Additional Resources

- [School Nutrition Programs Calendar](#)
- [IDOE's Nutrition webpage](#)
- [CNPweb](#)

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Department News

- 10/09/24 Hoosiers Encouraged to Share Feedback on Second Draft of Diploma Rule
- 10/02/24 Indiana Launches Early Childhood Education Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program

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