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School Nutrition Programs Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education



Indiana Department of Education sent this bulletin at 08/21/2024 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.

Tips of the Week

Traditional Verification Method Spreadsheet

Traditional verification is required for all approved meal benefit applications on file as of Tuesday, October 1. School food authorities (SFAs) can see whether they are required to conduct Standard (Error-Prone) method of verification on this [spreadsheet](#).

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) SFAs and Verification

If you are claiming under CEP at all sites in your corporation, you might be required to complete verification depending on how/whether you chose to collect alternate income applications for SUN Bucks.

CEP verification required if:

- Your site used the [USDA Meal Benefit Application](#). This requires SUN Bucks verification procedures to be followed based on applications on file as of April 1, 2025. Additional verification guidance will be given in the spring. These sponsors should not conduct verification in the fall.
- Your site used the [IDOE Alternate Income Application](#) with the SUN Bucks signature line included. This requires SUN Bucks verification procedures to be followed based on applications on file as of April 1, 2025. Additional verification guidance will be given in the spring. These sponsors should not conduct verification in the fall.

Indiana SUN Bucks

SUN Bucks Application Now Closed

The 2024 Indiana SUN Bucks application is now closed. No new applications will be accepted. The application for program year 2025 will open in the coming months.

Additional SUN Bucks Guidance

- Address change request notice: IDOE is still processing change of address requests submitted prior to program closure on Friday, August 16. Requests submitted after Friday, August 16, may not be completed before funds are expunged, per federal requirement, 122 days after issuance.
- To ensure households receive SUN Bucks cards to the correct address next year, please advertise the need for correct address information at the school-level by April 30, 2025.
- The first expungement date for the initial batch of cards issued is Saturday, September 14. Households that were part of the initial issuance were mailed letters last week stating how much

funding remained on the cards.

Farm to School

Protein Procurement Toolkit

The [Farm to School Protein Procurement Toolkit](#) is now live. After celebrating Protein for Food Day 2023, questions and difficulties with procuring and serving local protein in the child nutrition programs became evident. This toolkit was developed to answer some of the most commonly asked questions about procuring and serving local proteins. The toolkit is meant to be utilized in coordination with the Farm to School Procurement Toolkit, which can be found [here](#).

Purdue University Seeks Hydroponic Systems Partnerships

Does your high school have an agriculture, technology, or engineering program? Purdue University seeks to partner with Indiana schools to help lead a digital agriculture technology project through the use of hydroponic units in schools. The projects would consist of students building hydroponic systems and developing digital agriculture technologies to grow crops through indoor vertical farming methods. Students must work with their educator during after-school or non-traditional school settings to complete these projects. Stipends will be allocated to the teachers supporting the efforts. Supplies will also be covered using grant funds. Contact [Sophie Lindley](#), IDOE farm to school coordinator, if you have questions or are interested in learning more.

USDA Foods

Login.gov Account Required to Access Department of Defense Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (DoD FFAVORS)

All DoD FFAVORS external users must have a Login.gov account to access FFAVORS before Monday, September 30, per USDA. Access the [Login.gov website](#) and click the "Sign in with LOGIN.GOV" button. If you need assistance, contact the [FFAVORS help desk](#).

DoD Fresh Produce Orders and Receipting

Returning school sponsors that participated in the DoD program in school year 2023-2024 and have allocated funds for school year 2024-2025 can begin placing orders immediately in FFAVORS. Schools new to DoD in school year 2024-2025 must complete the [eAuthentication](#) process by creating a Login.gov account and await approval from USDA and DoD. IDOE will update sponsors new to DoD once accounts are approved. SFAs placing orders must receipt in FFAVORS within five days of receiving DoD orders.

Administrative and Storage Fees Increase for School Year (SY) 2025

Administrative fees for Direct Delivered (brown box) USDA Foods will increase to \$4.50 per case immediately due to state assigned warehouse (Dilgard Frozen Foods and Stanz-Troyers Foodservice) pricing increases. All SFAs are charged these fees. Storage fees have also increased for freezer, cooler, and dry Direct Delivered USDA Foods stored at the state assigned warehouse. These fees are charged to the SFA on a per case, per month basis when USDA Foods remain at the state assigned warehouse past the expire date listed in CNPweb. USDA Foods program fees can be found [here](#).

- Cooler: \$1.10
- Dry Goods: \$1.00
- Frozen: \$1.20

Food Service Management Companies (FSMCs) and SFAs

[This video](#) shares information about the roles of FSMCs, SFAs, and their collaboration to use USDA Foods efficiently.

Program Year (PY) 2025 for USDA Foods

PY 2025 has been hidden until the school year opens in July 2024. IDOE will notify schools via this newsletter once available.

USDA Foods Recipes

Use your USDA canned peaches for a delicious variation of [Peach Cooler](#). This recipe must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



Training and Webinar Opportunities

SY 2024-2025 Reminders and Resources Webinar

Join us for updates, reminders, and resources as we start another school year on Thursday, August 22, at 2 p.m. ET. [Register here.](#)

Reminders

Pre-Kindergarten Meals Policy Reminder

Schools Claiming Meals and Snacks Under the Child and Adult Care Food Program

[Policy 2024-03](#) states that schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must ensure that they do not claim meals or snacks for the same participants under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during the school day.

What does this mean?

Schools operating childcare centers or preschool programs have the option of serving and claiming breakfast and lunch under SBP/NSLP or serving and claiming two meals and a snack under CACFP during the school day.

If our school chooses to claim meals under the SBP/NSLP, can we provide snacks during the day?

Schools that serve and claim childcare/preschool meals under SBP/NSLP cannot also serve and claim CACFP snacks during the school day.

If a school wants to claim snacks during the school day, they must operate a childcare center where the recipient child is enrolled in childcare and all meals and snacks are provided to that child through CACFP. Alternatively, breakfast and lunch can be claimed under NSLP/SBP, and additional snacks can be provided to the children, but not claimed for reimbursement or paid for out of the non-profit school food service account.

After the school day has ended, schools claiming childcare/preschool meals under SBP/NSLP still have the option to claim after-school snacks under the [NSLP After-School Snack Program](#), or the [CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Program](#) or [CACFP Outside-School Hours Program](#), so long as they meet the requirements for operating those programs.

Please note, in order to claim meals under NSLP/SBP/CACFP, the school corporation must operate the childcare center/preschool program themselves. If an outside agency is operating the childcare center/preschool program, the school corporation cannot claim those meals. The SFA can vend meals to the outside agency, that may or may not choose to participate in CACFP under their own sponsorship.

Review the policy frequently asked questions [here](#).

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool Walk Through Webinar

USDA has released a PLE Tool walkthrough webinar for schools. If you need to complete the tool, please review this helpful presentation. Find it [here](#).

USDA Language Access Webinar

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Civil Rights Division (CRD) is pleased to announce an upcoming language access webinar, "How to Bridge Language and Cultural Barriers with FNS support." This webinar will be hosted on Wednesday, September 4, at 1 p.m. ET and again on Wednesday, September 11, at 1 p.m. ET.

Whether managing, administering, or supporting a federally assisted program, everyone has a role in engaging with all eligible individuals regardless of the language they speak. Overcoming language barriers is essential for effective communication and for ensuring equitable access and equal opportunity in program delivery.

- Wednesday, September 4, webinar course, register [here](#).
- Wednesday, September 11, webinar course, register [here](#).

Annual Financial Report (AFR) Updates

AFR is currently under construction in CNPweb for additional updates to the report. **These updates have affected previous years AFRs and will not allow a sponsor to submit an old AFR for approval.** Please refrain from editing previous years' AFRs until further notice. Sponsors are still able to view previous years AFRs using the view function, but please do not select the edit function as this will throw the AFR into error status. Once the system is ready and the 2024 AFR is opened in CNPweb, IDOE will share additional announcements. If you have any questions regarding the 2024 AFR, please email scnfinance@doe.in.gov.

Updates from Our Partners

Indiana Food Vision Survey

The Indiana Food Vision steering committee is working to create a master food vision that will be a strategic roadmap for cultivating a robust and nourishing food system where all communities in Indiana thrive. We want to hear from Hoosiers who eat, grow or buy food in Indiana - that means you! To learn

more and take the survey, visit the [Indiana Food Vision webpage](#). Survey results will help shape the future of the Indiana food system.

Upcoming Dates



Thursday, August 22, at 2 p.m. ET	2024-2025 Reminders and Resources Webinar
Wednesday, September 4, at 1 p.m. ET	USDA Language Access Webinar
Wednesday, September 11, at 1 p.m. ET	USDA Language Access Webinar
Monday, September 30	Deadline to activate Login.gov account for DoD FFAVORS

Additional Resources

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

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Department News

- [08/14/24 Stakeholder Feedback Drives Significant Updates to Second Draft of Indiana Diploma Proposal](#)
- [08/14/24 Indiana's Third Grade Literacy Rates Increase for Third Consecutive Year](#)
- [08/07/24 Indiana Department of Education Announces 2025 Indiana Teacher of the Year Top 10 Finalists](#)

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