

**From:** Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard J (MDE)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 06, 2011 3:54 PM  
**Subject:** Tuesday News from MDE 090611

"Welcome Back"!!! Ah, the phrase reminds me of the old TV show theme song from "Welcome Back, Kotter" starring Gabe Kaplan and John Travolta. If you are old enough to remember the show, join me in remembering those days and if you are too young to remember, listen to this not so bad theme song from yesteryear - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVS3Wnt7yRU> .

Back to work – I do welcome you back for another school year. It should be a very interesting year leading us into a school year (2012-2013) that promises to be like no other in over 30 years. This school year should be full of challenges and rewards. I am looking forward to it!

- 1) Change is coming - We are truly in the midst of major changes in how school lunch does business. When I started in the business in 1978, the key was to give kids what they wanted. Drive participation. Feed as many students as you can. Bring in as much money as legally and ethically possible. Of course, you still had to follow the meal pattern but there was much latitude. Now, the focus is to give the kids what is healthy. That, while not a COMPLETE change is still a significant one. I've always said that school food service TRAILS society. We didn't start the large order of fries but after McDonalds and all started to, and our customers starting expecting them, we made them available too. Pop was around and being marketed way before it was brought into any school or cafeteria. It was brought into schools backed by big contracts with school districts and sometimes the pop worked with the food service department and sometimes against. But I digress. The change to a healthier meal pattern, a tightening of control on competitive foods, and overall more emphasis on healthy school campuses is a good change. It is our turn to LEAD and not trail society. Offer and serve the most nutritious meals we can. Ideally, we can get our students to enjoy sweet potatoes, spinach salads and legumes so they ask for them at home. Maybe, just maybe, we can get restaurants and fast food places to TRAIL us. Will this be easy? No. Will it happen overnight? No. Do we have to make our best try? Yes.
- 2) What You Must Have Done – The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act was signed into law in December of 2010. Parts of it were meant to be implemented immediately, some phased in over time. Following are the parts you must have done prior to or put in place for the 2011-2012 school year:
  - a. Paid price equity – if your average lunch price was between \$1.60 and \$2.46, you were required to raise prices or find non-federal sources to make up the difference of not raising your price.
  - b. Nonprogram foods – the United States Department of Agriculture wants to make sure any nonprogram foods sold (a la carte, catering, etc.) bring in a proportionate amount of revenue (to the cost) as the school meal programs do.
  - c. Outreach - Your district needed to provide outreach on any summer school food service program operating in your community, prior to the end of last school year. At the beginning of this school year, your district must have told the community about the availability of breakfast at your participating schools.

- d. The One Meal Pattern Change for this Year - Milk this year must be a variety of any 1% or skim milk, flavored or unflavored – no 2% percent or whole milk to be served at all.
  - e. Water Requirement – you must make water available to all students WITHOUT RESTRICTION. It can be a water fountain in or near the serving/cafeteria area, pitchers of water with cups, faucet with cups, 5 gallon jugs of water with cups or any method that will provide water to students without restriction.
  - f. Foster Children – are now categorically eligible for free meals without further application. They are now included in our direct certification list as well.
  - g. Social Security Numbers – on free and reduced applications, only the last 4 digits are required.
  - h. Local Wellness Policy – districts need to work on improving the content and enforcement of a Local Wellness Policy.
  - i. School Food Safety – food must be served properly no matter where on campus it may be served. Correct food safety and handling procedures are to be followed whether it is in the cafeteria, breakfast in the classroom, or the parents booster club serving food in the gym.
- 3) What I Hope You Have Done – Not to be preachy, but I hope at least some of you took my advice and worked on such things as a budget, marketing plan, new menu ideas, and any other thing that will help either your program or yourself to be the best it can.
- 4) Make Sure You Stay in the Know – I occasionally get questioned why people don't receive my weekly emails or other communications from this office. While we can manually add names to our list, it is best for a whole variety of reasons to update your information. For example, when we send out notifications for the National School Lunch Program, we pull the email addresses from the Michigan Electronic Grants System Plus (MEGS+). Any changes made to email addresses will have to be done by your school/organization through 2012 MEGS+ CNP: School Nutrition Programs, which can be found at the following link: <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/megsplus/>. This is done by amending #8 Contact Person or #12 Food Service Director on the Sponsor Information page in 2012 MEGS+ CNP: School Nutrition Programs. If you have any questions, contact our department at 517-373-3347. Thank you.

Hey, that's enough for the first week. I know you are all busy feeding kids this week so I will let you have at it. I'll be back next week. 'til then!!!

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**From:** Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard J (MDE)  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 22, 2011 2:14 PM  
**To:** MDE-SchoolNutrition  
**Subject:** Tuesday News from MDE 092011

Yes, I know it's Thursday, but I took a couple of days off so it SEEMS to me like Tuesday. Enough with the excuses – here is some news:

- 1) Community Eligibility Option (CEO) - The application date has now passed, and it looks like we will end up with over 70 districts participating, comprising nearly 200,000 students that will now be able to get a free breakfast and lunch everyday. Our first "anecdotal" story has absenteeism way down, at least partially due to CEO. For those schools that qualified for CEO, we will be having a conference call next week to explain some of the details of CEO and to answer questions.
- 2) Local Wellness Policies (LWP) - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released the new *School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*. This resource contains nine guidelines to help schools develop, implement, and evaluate healthy eating and physical activity policies. Each guideline contains implementation strategies to help schools meet the recommendations. To access the guidelines, click on the following link: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm>. This resource is highlighted in the FNS Policy Memo SP 42-2011: Local Wellness Policies at [http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy%E2%80%90Memos/2011/SP42%E2%80%902011\\_os.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy%E2%80%90Memos/2011/SP42%E2%80%902011_os.pdf). Use this information as you work towards implementing the new LWP requirements.
- 3) School Meals Program Requirements Training - The Michigan Department of Education will be presenting the School Meals Program Requirements Training at the School Nutrition Association of Michigan conference on Thursday and Friday, November 10-11. If you are new to school food service, interested in a refresher course, or want to be brought up to date on the latest changes in our business, I STRONGLY encourage your participation. Our presentation is free, takes a day and a half, and, in general, even school food service veterans learn something new. It also provides an opportunity to network with your colleagues. To register, contact SNAM at [www.michigansna.org](http://www.michigansna.org) or go directly to the registration form - <http://www.michigansna.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/2011-Annual-Conference-Registration-Form.pdf>.

Have a great rest of the week!!

*Howard Leikert, MBA, SNS*

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**From:** Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard J (MDE)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 13, 2011 4:06 PM  
**To:** MDE-SchoolNutrition  
**Subject:** Tuesday News from MDE 091311

How time flies!! It's been a week already so here is the second installment of my weekly news update:

- 1) Community Eligibility Option – Hopefully, you have all received information about this exciting opportunity for Michigan and the students we serve. If for some reason you have fallen through the cracks, there is plenty of information on our website, [www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition](http://www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition), under Community Eligibility Option. Applications are due Thursday, September 15, 2011.
- 2) National School Lunch Week – This year it is October 10-14. Start making plans now (if you haven't already) to celebrate the week that should be important to us all. With all of the media attention on school nutrition, you might be able to get the local media to come and do a POSITIVE story on the school lunch program.
- 3) Milk – Not to repeat myself from last week, but there shouldn't be any 2% or higher milk fat content being served in our school meals programs. 1% or skim only!! I know some schools are using only flavored and unflavored skim milk!! Great way to get your fat content down for the health of your students and for the School Meals Initiative (SMI) reviews.
- 4) Great to Meet You All – I had the privilege of traveling to various sites across the state this past summer to do presentations, and I enjoyed meeting all of you dedicated and hardworking people out in the field. While making it to individual school districts isn't likely, if you are having a meeting with a group of school districts and you'd like me to do a presentation, let me know. I enjoy getting in the field and answering all your questions (as best I can anyhow).
- 5) Count Date – To a large extent because of Community Eligibility, I have been referring to Field 31 on the MSDS system a lot lately. It has just come to my attention that in MSDS the field is no longer called "Field 31." It is called "Supplemental Nutrition Eligibility." Also, October 5 is the count date, not the collection date. Schools must enter appropriate information in the Supplemental Nutrition Eligibility characteristic in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) as of the October 5 count date.

I hope you are all off to a successful start this school year. I will be back again next week with some more information. As always, if you have questions that you think would have universal interest, let me know and I will include it. Thanks!

*Howard Leikert, MBA, SMS*

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**From:** Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard J (MDE)  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2011 11:54 AM  
**To:** MDE-SchoolNutrition  
**Subject:** Tuesday News from MDE 092711

For some of you, my opening topic may be one you are tired of hearing about but it is important for the schools participating in the Community Eligibility Option (CEO). The other points hopefully have more universal interest.

- 1) Community Eligibility Option – While nearly all applications have been approved at this point, I still hear questions from the field on what qualifies students as directly certified. As this option is based on this information, it is important for all to understand. Directly certified students include only those students that are listed on a direct certification list and are enrolled at the same time. It does not include students who are categorically eligible based on submission of a paper household eligibility application. Therefore, for example, students that were approved for free meals on an application due to their reporting of a case number do NOT count as directly certified. Only those students that show up on the direct certification list (plus homeless, runaway, migrant, Head Start, and foster) are eligible to be counted as directly certified. If you think you may have reported incorrect information on your application, please let us know now so that we can calculate correct percentages for this school year. We will be performing audits of this information and want to make sure accurate information was used in the approved applications.
- 2) We Shall See – I had a phone interview with a newspaper today. During the interview, I was able to tell the reporter about the positive changes that have already been made in school food service and the potential additional changes with the new meal pattern. I talked about how many schools have already begun to serve whole grain foods even though it is not yet required. I told her most schools have been working at eliminating trans fats from their menus and cutting back on sodium. Discussed with her how schools are using items like sweet potato fries (sometimes mixed with regular) to introduce students to “red/orange” vegetables and all the nutrients they provide. Used the example of since 2006, the ordering of USDA soy bean oil (used for deep frying foods) has decreased by 73%. This change represents the huge decrease in fried foods and almost an incalculable decrease in the number of calories served to our students!! Discussed how different people perceive different foods as healthy or unhealthy. Told her that school food service cannot cure the obesity issue alone – society in general, including restaurants, fast food companies, parents, school districts (schools need to sell healthy foods campus wide), industry, and other aspects of our children’s lives need to address this complex issue. Anyhow, I told her the media doesn’t often let the

- public know of the positive changes occurring right now in school food service. We shall see what the resulting article covers.
- 3) Farm to School – There are a lot positive aspects of the Farm to School Program. Please see the following link for information and registration on the Celebrating Farm to School webinar being held this Thursday, September 29, 2011, at 3 p.m. EST:  
<http://vovici.com/wsb.dll/s/17fb9g4c886>.

I am wrapping up this week's News. I missed Tuesday AGAIN but will try to get back on track. It has been a busy start to a new school year here at MDE. Hope your first month has gone well!

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