



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

March 19, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors
Non-Public School Administrators
Residential Child Care Institutions

FROM: Kyle Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent *KG*

SUBJECT: Whole Grain-Rich Requirement Exemption Process Now Available

Participants in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) have worked tirelessly to implement the many healthy school environment changes as a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) applauds all the efforts and appreciates the struggles that school food service has faced as a result.

The move to Whole Grain-Rich (WGR) products was a gradual process, beginning in School Year (SY) 2012-2013. Since that time, industry partners and USDA Foods have worked diligently to develop products that meet the WGR requirements. However, a few School Food Authorities (SFAs) have continued to experience difficulty in finding and/or serving WGR products that are acceptable to students. As a result, MDE is pleased to have developed a process for SFAs to request a temporary exemption from the current WGR requirement in both the NSLP and SBP in SY 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

Following the USDA requirements set forth in the USDA memo SP 20-2015, MDE will accept WGR exemption applications and will provide an approval/denial response to the SFA within ten (10) working days. To apply for the exemption, complete the following survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3V2D7DP>. Exemptions will be granted for specific products for which the SFA can demonstrate a hardship in procuring compliant WGR products that are acceptable to students. SFAs requesting an exemption for pasta only and have an existing, approved waiver for enriched pasta do not need to apply for this new exemption.

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MDE is pleased to offer this opportunity for relief for those specific products that have still proven difficult while our industry partners catch up with the multitude of HHFKA regulations. Our commitment to cooperative compliance, additional training and technical assistance opportunities, and improved student academic success through healthy school environments continues through this opportunity. Questions regarding this memorandum can be addressed to the School Nutrition Programs Unit via email at MDE-SchoolNutrition@michigan.gov or phone at 517-373-3347.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance