



Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) News and Updates

July 22, 2021

Paid Lunch Equity Tool School Year 2021-2022 Communication

The School Year (SY) 2021-2022 Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool is now available.

What are the requirements for SY 2021-2022?

School Food Authorities (SFAs) only operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for SY 2021-2022 do not have to meet the PLE requirements including completing the PLE Tool per Covid-19: [Child Nutrition Response Waiver #97](#) - Nationwide Waiver to Provide Flexibility for School Meal Programs Administrative Reviews of School Food Authorities Operating Only the Seamless Summer Option in School Year (SY) 2021-2022.

SFAs that will be operating normal NSLP in SY 2021-2022 must complete the PLE Tool and follow the PLE requirements.

- [SP11 CACFP10 SFSP06-2021](#) has allowed a PLE Exemption from raising prices in SY 2021-2022 for all SFAs with a documented positive or zero fund balance in their Non-profit School Food Service Account (NSFSA) as of December 31, 2020.
 - SFAs with a positive fund balance must still complete the PLE Tool. Paid meal prices may still be raised based on a SFA's discretion.
 - SFAs with a positive fund balance must document the PLE Tool completion and their fund balance as of December 31, 2020, if they choose to not raise meal prices. Documentation should consist of an updated Detailed General Ledger for the Food Service Fund (Fund

25) as of December 31, 2020, that clearly indicates the fund balance information.

- SFAs with a negative fund balance as of December 31, 2020, must complete the PLE Tool and follow at least the minimum required price increase indicated in their completed PLE Tool.
- Pricing/sales data from October 2019 can be used to complete the PLE Tool if a SFA does not have pricing/sales data from October 2020.

Here is the link to the [SY 2021-2022 PLE Tool](#).

Questions regarding PLE Tool requirements can be sent to the Fiscal Monitoring Team at MDE-Fiscal@Michigan.gov.

Questions and Answers:

Q: My SFA will be operating NSLP SSO for SY 2021-2022. Do I need to complete the PLE Tool?

A: No, per [Child Nutrition Response Waiver #97](#)

Q: My SFA has a positive fund balance and I plan to take the exemption; do I need to complete the PLE Tool?

A: Yes, for SFAs operating in normal NSLP in SY 2021-2022. The PLE Tool is an annual requirement, and each tool is dependent on the previous tool to carry on the applicable requirement price.

Q: Can I still raise prices if I have a positive fund balance?

A: Yes. Even if you have a positive fund balance as of December 31, 2020, you may still decide to raise prices to avoid a larger price increase in future years. Raising prices also helps maintain a positive fund balance. It is up to the discretion of the SFA.

Q: My SFA has a negative fund balance, do I need to complete the PLE Tool?

A: Yes, for SFAs operating in normal NSLP in SY 2021-2022. The PLE Tool is an annual requirement, and each tool is dependent on the previous tool to carry on the applicable requirement price. SFA's with a negative fund balance must also raise prices by at least the minimum required in their completed PLE Tool.

Q: I do not know how to complete the PLE Tool. Where do I go for help?

A: Please contact our Fiscal Monitoring Team at MDE-Fiscal@michigan.gov or 517-241-5380. Our Financial Analysts can help!

Q: Where do I find the new PLE Tool?

A: Here is the link to the [SY 2021-2022 PLE Tool](#).

Available NexSys Training Dates in July & August

NexSys – Getting Started

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is transitioning from MEGS+ to NexSys for applications and grants. MDE will be providing Zoom trainings for NexSys on the dates and times listed below. These sessions will give the user a brief overview of the basics of MILogin for Third Party account setup, an understanding of the new platform, navigation tips, and guidance on completing applications in NexSys.

These sessions will not include the accounting and cash components of NexSys. Complete accounting and cash trainings will be offered closer to September 1 when the CMS transition to NexSys takes place.

- Thursday, July 29, 2021 @ 9:00 AM (EST)

<https://zoom.us/j/94571966161?pwd=L2w5S1pWM0tCVHNNanJzNm9rSVZKdz09>

- Monday, August 2, 2021 @ 9:00 AM (EST)

<https://zoom.us/j/91775928930?pwd=V0hTTjJBd0lwWDJpSkVkvFNwMDQ1UT09>

- Friday, August 13, 2021 @ 10:00 AM(EST)

<https://zoom.us/j/96733965331?pwd=dEh4ekRBRko3YWVIL3dSS3hreDhoQT09>

New Campaign: Michigan's Mighty Meals

We are very excited to announce the launch of **Michigan's Mighty Meals - a state-wide communications campaign from MDE to parents and families**. Mighty Meals seeks to increase meal participation, improve perceptions of school meals, and support the great work you all do.

Informed by input from directors across the state, the campaign will include family-facing digital communications and **tools to help you spread the word. Mighty Meals are school meals for every student at no cost.**

The first set of tools are available now!

- Email/Newsletter Content
- Flyer/Handout for Printing
- Logo
- Style guide

Please include these materials in your upcoming newsletters, social media, and back to school communications! Be on the lookout for additional information and resources.

[Get the Toolkit](#)

Upcoming Events

Town Hall Meetings

Topic: Town Hall Meeting

Date: Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

[Wednesday, August 18, 2021](#)

Password: AwTs0L

Or Telephone:

Dial: USA 404 443 6397
USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)
Conference code: 806533

Town Hall Meetings

Topic: Town Hall Meeting

Time: Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

[Wednesday, September 15, 2021](#)

Password: 014491

Or Telephone:

Dial: USA 404 443 6397
USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)
Conference code: 806533

Grant Opportunities

10- Cents a Meal Grant Application

The School Year 10-Cents a Meal grant application will be open **August 2nd through August 16th** for all school and non-school sponsors who participate in child nutrition programs. Eligible meals include school meals (SNP) and Seamless Summer (SSO) meals of breakfast, lunch, afterschool snacks, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meals of breakfast, lunch, snacks, suppers and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) meals of breakfast, lunch, and snacks. **A link will be sent out to all eligible sponsors with full instructions.**

The 10-Cents a Meal grant is a competitive match-grant opportunity to be reimbursed for purchasing and serving local produce in your child nutrition programs. All meal patterns include a fruit, vegetable, or legume – use this opportunity to make it a Michigan one! Awarded grant amounts are based on past local purchasing and range from \$1,000 to \$50,000. Funds are paid out in 10-cent increments for every meal served with a piece of local produce.

Farm to School Award Grantees

Congratulations to our Michigan Farm to School award grantees! The USDA awarded a record-breaking \$12 million in Farm to School grants where 176 projects were funded nationally including 31 projects in the Midwest region and 4 projects right here in Michigan!

- Montague Area Public Schools
- Bethany Housing Ministries, Inc (in partnership with Muskegon Middle School and the Muskegon Farm to School Planning Team)
- Crim Fitness Foundation
- YWCA Kalamazoo

This year's Farm to School Grants will help expand access to fresh, local foods and hands-on agricultural learning for children across 45 states and the District of Columbia. The awarded projects will serve more than 1.4 million students at more than 6,800 schools.

Updates, Guidance, and Regulation Information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services

New feature alert for the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool!

A new feature is now available on the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT). Team Nutrition appreciates receiving user feedback on the PSTTT and works continuously to enhance the user experience. Users can select a training title from a list of training titles available on the PSTTT and information related to the training, such as the length of the training, training provider, key area(s), training topic(s), and learning objective(s) will auto-populate. If users do not find the training they completed on the PSTTT training list, they may manually add the new training title and information to the list. With the latest update, users will now be able to easily upload multiple new training titles at one time to be included in the PSTTT instead of adding one at a time.

Track your professional standards required training hours today using USDA's free [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool!](#)

Register Now! Everything You Need to Know about GS1 GDSN! Accessing Nutrient, Allergen, and Ingredient information for USDA Foods in Schools

Date: Thursday, August 5, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Time

Description: FNS plans to release a new initiative that will allow States and school districts to access up-to-date, vendor-specific nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information for direct delivered USDA Foods. The GS1 GDSN project will inform the ordering decisions of FNS stakeholders and will help them manage meal planning to meet USDA nutrition standards and provide safe meals for students with food allergies and other special dietary needs. Register for this webinar to learn more about how this information will be made available and when USDA Foods vendors will be required to submit nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information. This webinar is intended for States and school districts that serve direct delivered USDA Foods for child nutrition programs.

WebEx link: <https://usda-fns.webex.com/usda-fns/onstage/g.php?MTID=e20d21918e624ab454ba2f4d2f183ee51>

Event Number: 199 850 4565

Event Password: P5aE4qwbjH3

Audio Conference: To receive a call back, provide your phone number when you join the event, or call the number below and enter the access code.

US Toll: +1-415-527-5035

[Show all global call-in numbers](#)

Access code: 199 850 4565

Now Available! Webinar Captioned in Spanish!

USDA's Team Nutrition initiative is pleased to announce the release of the "How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool" English webinar with captions in Spanish.

This webinar demonstrates enhancements to the Exhibit A Grains Tool, which is a feature included with the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG) Interactive Web-Based Tool and FBG Mobile App. The Exhibit A Grains Tool allows a user to search for a grain product (as listed on Exhibit A) and enter in the serving size from the product label. The tool then helps the user determine:

1. ounce equivalent (oz eq) grains or grains/bread serving(s) for the grain product,
1. amount to serve to provide a desired grains contribution, and
1. amount to serve for a grain product in the order to meet the minimum grains requirement by age/grade groups for specific Child Nutrition Programs.

The webinar can be viewed and downloaded at [Food Buying Guide Training Resources](#).

Previously Issued Questions and Answers Relating to Operation of the Child Nutrition Programs: Updated for School Year 2021-2022

On July 14, 2021, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released the *Consolidated Q&As on Operation of CN Programs, updated for School Year 21-22*. This memorandum includes questions and answers intended to provide clarification to State agencies and Program operators as they operate the Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), during school year (SY) 2021-2022. These questions and answers were previously issued in calendar year 2020 and have been updated for application to SY 2021-2022.

Reminders and Due Dates

YOU WILL BE LOCKED OUT IF YOU DO NOT DO THIS!

Linking MILogin and MEIS

We want to remind everyone about the messages coming through MEGS+ requesting users to create a MILogin for Third Party account and link that account to their current MEIS account.

This is a requirement and the first step in the transition to our new system, NexSys. If you haven't done this already, please do so as soon as possible. [Instructions](#) on how to complete this are available.

By getting this step done now, it will save time and added stress when users are finally required to access and work in NexSys

Training Corner

Reducing Sodium in School Meals Webinar

Join us for a webinar on reducing sodium in school meals on August 3, 2021 at 2:00 PM. For the 21-22 School Year, a waiver is available to continue meeting Target 1 sodium guidelines. However, we are trying to return to National School Lunch Program nutrition standards. This webinar will help you understand the role of sodium in the body, identify common sources of sodium and learn culinary methods to reduce sodium while preserving flavor. The webinar is designed as a Train the Trainer, so you are able to use the materials to train your staff on how to reduce sodium in meals. Please [register](#) in advance for this meeting. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Core Competencies Training for New Directors

Registration for SY 21-22 Core Competencies Training for New Directors class is open. The class kicks off in August and will have virtual monthly meetings through the school year. This class replaces School Meals Overview Training (SMOT). Register [here](#).

Michigan Nutrition Training Calendar

During this time of necessary social distancing, it is very important for the field to have access to all the virtual trainings available to them, to help them continue to do their jobs. If you are offering an online/virtual training, please fill out and submit this questionnaire: [I want my training added to the Michigan Nutrition Training Calendar](#). Be sure to fill out ALL of the information including NA if the question does not apply. Trainings cannot be added to the calendar without the complete information.

Please visit the [Michigan Nutrition Training Calendar](#), a one-stop-shop calendar that lists child nutrition trainings across the state. The more trainings listed, the better the calendar will be for our Child Nutrition Programs!

If you have questions, contact MDE-MINutritionTraining@michigan.gov.

[How to Access the Michigan Nutrition Training Calendar](#).



Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I haven't filled out my 2022 School Nutrition Program Application yet. Where do I go?

Answer: The 2022 School Nutrition Program Application is not yet available, but it will be very soon. You will be given time to complete it. The application will be in MGES+ as you in the past. A special bulletin will be sent out when it is open.

Question: Where are the materials for the Mighty Meals campaign?

Answer: On the [MDE website](#). Under the Resources for Schools, you will find the logo, style guide, email blurb and flyer. More resources will be added, so check back again.

Contact Us

Email: MDE-SchoolNutrition@Michigan.gov

Nutrition Gateway: The Michigan Department of Education [Nutrition Gateway](#) provides Child Nutrition Program (CNP) agencies a singular system to access annual CNP applications (MEGSplus), monthly claims (MIND) and periodic administrative reviews (GEMS/MARS) through an integrated dashboard and portal.

If you or someone you know is interested in receiving the Child Nutrition Programs News and Updates and Bulletins, visit [Child Nutrition Programs News and Updates Subscription](#).

Support

School Nutrition Programs

www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition

Email: MDE-
schoolnutrition@michigan.gov

Summer Food Service Program

www.michigan.gov/sfsp

Email: mde-sfsp@michigan.gov

Child and Adult Care Food Program

www.michigan.gov/cacfp

Email: mde-cnap-cacfp@michigan.gov

Food Distribution

www.michigan.gov/mde-fdp

Email: mde-fmfd@michigan.gov

Fiscal and Administrative Services

www.michigan.gov/mde-fast

Email: MDE-Fiscal@michigan.gov

Procurement and Contracts

[www.michigan.gov/mde-](http://www.michigan.gov/mde-foodservicecontracts)

foodservicecontracts

Email: mde-fsmc-
vended@michigan.gov

School Health and Safety

www.michigan.gov/cshsp

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

USDA Civil Rights Complaint Links:

https://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf
<https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>

Links Used in this Document:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/child-nutrition-response-97>
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/sp11-cacfp10-sfsp06-2021>
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/child-nutrition-response-97>
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144_92988-563282--,00.html?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mm-toolkit&utm_term=directors&utm_content=toolkit-1
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144_92988-563282--,00.html?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mm-toolkit&utm_term=directors&utm_content=toolkit-1
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144_92988-563282--,00.html?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mm-toolkit&utm_term=directors&utm_content=toolkit-1
<https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usda.gov/>
<https://usda-fns.webex.com/cmp3300/webcomponents/widget/globalcallin/globalcallin.do?siteurl=usda-fns&serviceType=EC&eventID=1225284472&tollFree=0>
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-training-resources>
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/core-competencies-training-for-new-directors-school-year-2021-2022-registration-155987949155>

<https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gateway/Authentication/TrainingCalendar>
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Michigan_Nutrition_Training_Calendar_Access_678629_7.pdf
https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new?topic_id=MIMDE_229