



School Nutrition Programs (SNP) News and Updates

November 19, 2020

Verification in School Year 2020-2021

The USDA has confirmed that school districts must conduct verification this school year, but has extended the Verification deadline to February 28, 2021. Whether you are currently participating in SFSP or NSLP, **all** schools and districts that collected free and Reduced-Price Meal applications are required to conduct Verification.

The Verification sample should be based on approved current school year applications as of October 1, 2020. Sponsors have the discretion to complete Verification ahead of the February 28 deadline.

More information is available on the School Nutrition Programs [Verification](#) webpage. Questions on Verification may be directed to mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov.

Information From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Feed Your Child Nutritious School Meals While Supporting Your School

The CDC has developed the [Feed Your Child Nutritious School Meals While Supporting Your School](#) webpage to help spread messaging on the importance of

School Meal Programs. Feel free to share the link in your next newsletter or on your webpage.

School Meals Programs Are For All Kids Toolkit

To help spread the word that school meals are for all children, CDC has created a [toolkit](#) for our partners. The toolkit contains additional background about the USDA waivers, sample social media posts, graphics, and newsletter text for you to use in your own communication efforts. We hope you find these resources helpful to alert parents of this information.

School Year 2020-2021 Child Nutrition Programs Sponsor Integrity Plan Template

The [Sponsor Integrity Plan Template](#) is available on the NSLP and SFSP Resources webpages. Sponsors must fill out this template and keep it on file at the sponsor level. The word template includes guiding questions to help you develop your own plan based on local level policies and procedures. We have also provided example statements that can be used as is, or tweaked to reflect how programs are actually being administered and operated at the local level. The following categories are part of the Program Integrity Plan Template:

- Equitable Access
- Counting and Claiming
- Community Distribution
- Training
- Meal Quality and Meal Components

MDE will ask to see the Program Integrity Plan during an Administrative Review, please be sure to keep it on file for at least three years plus the current per USDA regulations. It does not need to be submitted to MDE. Questions on the Sponsor Integrity Plan may be directed to mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov

Upcoming Events

Town Hall Meetings

Topic: Town Hall Meeting

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89953203445?pwd=dIF2Q0FETDdWdHBMQ3g3enFIVldgZz09>

Password: Xy4Yje

Or Telephone:

Dial: USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

Topic: Town Hall Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 13, 2021

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87977525907?pwd=Njk1MGIrTXFpclVCT1V2ZnU4aTJlQT09>

Password: vxrHH1

Or Telephone:

Dial: USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

Topic: Town Hall Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 10, 2021

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86120065891?pwd=NnpDU25FTnFOZENxVGdyWWZqRHRwUT09>

Password: 3aXe91

Or Telephone:

Dial: USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

School Nutrition Association of Michigan (SNAM) Virtual Annual Conference & Exhibit Show - November 10 until December 31, 2020

Registration is now open. Please visit [HERE](#) to register today.

Chef Jeff will be kicking us off on November 10 at 2 pm with a live keynote.

The remainder educational sessions will be pre-recorded and available from November 10 until December 31 so that you and your team can watch as many as you would like at a time most convenient to you! Sessions will involve the following topics:

1. Mental Health, self-care, employee health, leading in stressful times, having fun, treating people nicely
2. Local foods, food distribution, meal quality, meal service options and related equipment
3. MDE track: all things school meal regulations
4. Financial: best use of commodity dollars, increasing participation, KPIs, meal debt

There will also be a virtual food show presented by From the Show Floor, where you will have the opportunity to view episodes from your favorite vendors, anytime during our conference event. Please visit the [registration page](#) for a full list of participating industry partners.

More information to come on a detailed agenda.

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

USDA Memorandum SP 04-2021, CACFP 03-2021, SFSP 03-2021: Questions and Answers Relating to the Nationwide Waiver to Allow Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Option Operations during School Year 2020-2021 – Q&As #31

This [memorandum](#) includes questions and answers intended to provide clarification to State agencies and Program operators as they continue to operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during the school year.

Pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127), and based on the exceptional circumstances of this public health emergency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has issued several nationwide waivers and has exercised existing

statutory and regulatory authorities to support access to nutritious meals while minimizing potential exposure to the novel coronavirus. Additional information on the FNS Response to the pandemic is available at [USDA - Pandemic Information](#).

Reminders and Due Dates

Student Meal Negative Balance Forgiveness School Year 2020-2021

[31k Application Link](#)

The 31k Grant Application is open! Apply by December 1st!

For the 2020/2021 School Year only, we have \$1 million in new state school aid fund money appropriated (Section 31k) for reimbursement payments to public school districts, charter schools and public-school academies who forgive all outstanding current student-meal negative balances.

Reimbursement payments can be awarded to eligible districts that apply. The application is now live and has a firm deadline to apply no later than December 1st, 2020.

Submissions will be evaluated and reimbursement payments for selected districts will be made within 60 days of the final deadline. The funds may be prorated if there is not enough to cover all eligible submissions.

To be eligible districts must:

- Write off outstanding current/active/enrolled student meal negative balances with a transfer from the General Fund
 - Student Meal Negative Balances paid off from private donations or angel funds are not eligible for Forgiveness Reimbursement
 - Bad debt written off for inactive students in prior school years is not eligible for Student Meal Negative Balance Forgiveness Reimbursement
- Adopt a meal charge policy that prevents public identification and all forms of lunch shaming as outlined in State Aid Section 31k (see below)

The application will require submission of the following:

1. The transactions used to write off current negative balances from the Food Service Fund with a transfer from the General Fund
2. Total amount of forgiven negative balances for current/active/enrolled students as of September 30, 2020 by eligibility status

3. A copy of the student roster by eligibility of negative balances for current/active/enrolled students as of September 30, 2020
4. Meal charge policy that prevents lunch shaming with the specifics outlined in State Aid Section 31k as follows:
 - prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to wear a wristband or handstamp
 - prohibits the requiring of students who cannot pay for a school meal or who owe a negative balance to perform chores or other work to pay for school meals
 - prohibits the requiring of students to dispose of a meal after it has been served because the student is unable to pay for the meal or has a negative balance
 - prohibits the direct communication with a student about a negative balance unless your district has unsuccessfully attempted to contact the student's parent or legal guardian first through telephone, mail, and electronic mail
 - prohibits discussing a negative balance with a student in the presence of other students

Questions regarding this grant application can be sent to the Fiscal and Administrative Services Monitoring Team at MDE-Fiscal@Michigan.gov or 517-241-5380.

Questions and Answers:

Q: How far back can we go for negative balance write offs? Just the 2019/2020 school year?

A: To be eligible the negative balances must be outstanding from current students as of September 30th, 2020 and it must be written off from the General Fund. Negative balances from inactive students (bad debt) are not eligible.

Q: Can I just wipe/forgive the negative balances from the Food Service Fund without a transfer from the General Fund?

A: No. It is not allowable to absorb negative balances in the Food Service Fund. They must be paid for from a non-federal funding source like the General Fund (excluding donations or Angel Funds).

Q: Does the meal charge policy have to be Board approved?

A: No, this is not a requirement. However, it is a best practice.

Q: How will I be notified if my district is chosen to receive the Forgiveness funding?

A: You will receive a notification from GEMS/MARS once the awardees have been chosen.

Q: What if I am not selected for a grant payment? Can we reverse the write off entries in the Food Service Fund?

A: No, once the negative balances are written off the Food Service Fund they cannot be reversed. The district can choose to try to collect on those negative balances within the General Fund, however.

2021 MEGS+ CNP: SNP Application

If your school is going to switch to Extended SFSP beginning in August or September 2020, you must still complete the 2021 MEGS+ SNP application. It is very important that MDE approves both the 2020 SFSP and the 2021 SNP applications.

Michigan Electronic Grant System Plus (MEGS+) Child Nutrition Programs (CNP): School Nutrition Programs (SNP) 2021 Application is now available.

The MEGS+ website for completing the SNP 2021 Application is at [MEGS+](#).

Questions of the Week

Question: Can we hand out more than 7 days-worth of food at one time for the December break?

Answer: No, current USDA guidance does not support more than 7 days worth of meals being handed out at one time.

Question: We typically provide multiple meal distributions on Fridays. Can we hand out 7 days worth of meals on Friday, December 18 (for Dec. 19-25) and then hand out meals again on Wednesday, December 23 (for Dec. 26- Jan. 1)?

Answer: Yes, because the weekly meal service distribution would land on a major holiday, MDE will allow this one time exception so households can get meals for the second week of break and food service staff will get a break! You cannot provide more than 7 days worth of meals and you must document accordingly.

Question: What do I do when in ‘person classes’ are cancelled to due COVID-19?

Answer: If your site is *open*, this site shows up on the Meet Up and Eat Up map

- Amend MEGS+ as soon as possible

If your site is *open-restricted*, this site does not show up on the Meet Up and Eat Up map

- Amend MEGS+ within the month

If you make changes to your meal service model, an amendment must take place as soon as you have finalized your plans.

Training Corner

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 MI 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 MI Nutrition Training Calendar](#)

School Nutrition Programs Training - Update

During this time of necessary social distancing, MDE has canceled scheduled in-person trainings for the time being. Instead, MDE will begin offering virtual training on various topics. Please check back periodically at the [MDE Training Website page](#) to see what is planned.

Chef Ann Foundation - Free Course Details

The following is from the Chef Ann Foundation: To support school food workers during this difficult time, the Chef Ann Foundation is offering free [School Food Institute](#) (SFI) courses. The SFI is an online professional development platform focused on healthy school food. SFI uses an interactive design with videos and resources, and meets USDA Professional Standards. Each course typically costs \$99 - \$149.

School food staff members may enroll in **up to 3** free SFI courses of their choosing. Learn more about SFI and view courses by visiting [SFI Course Catalog](#)

This offer is first-come, first-serve, so if interested, we encourage you to enroll as soon as possible. Course access lasts for 6 months from the date of enrollment. Courses are available with Spanish subtitles.

Note: Currently, we are almost at capacity for processing scholarships. We are now asking people to sign up for the [waitlist](#). As our capacity increases, we will open up more scholarship opportunities.

How to Enroll

- Select your desired course(s) from the [Course Catalog page](#).
- Add the course/s to the cart.
- To check out, click on the cart icon at the top right corner and select "Checkout." At checkout, enter coupon code **RemotePD20** to receive your free registration. Each student must enroll with their own email address (this creates a unique student account). If the code is no longer valid, that means that all seats have been claimed. PLEASE sign up for our [scholarship waitlist](#) - we open new free seats regularly, and would love to support you when we can.
- After checkout, you'll receive an email shortly with links & how to access SFI.

Contact info@schoolfoodinstitute.org with questions.

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 School Nutrition News and Updates and SNP Bulletins, visit [School Nutrition News and Updates Subscription](#).

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, 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.

Links Used in this Document:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/schoolmeals.htm?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_1009-DM42011&ACSTrackingLabel=Feed%20Your%20Child%20Nutritious%20School%20Meals%20While%20Supporting%20Your%20School&deliveryName=USCDC_1009-DM42011

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/skpch0hssBNLD/>
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144-518545--,00.html
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/qas3-nationwide-waiver-sfsp-seamless-summer-through-sy-2020-21>
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/coronavirus>
<https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gems/public/QuestionnaireHome.aspx?code=i4a9scdr>
<https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gateway/Authentication/TrainingCalendar>
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Michigan_Nutrition_Training_Calendar_Access_678629_7.pdf
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144_94240_94245-508154--,00.html
<https://www.schoolfoodinstitute.org/>
<https://www.schoolfoodinstitute.org/course-catalog/>
<https://www.schoolfoodinstitute.org/scholarship-waitlist/>
<https://mdoe.state.mi.us/gateway/Authentication/Login>
https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new?topic_id=MIMDE_229
https://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf