

Good afternoon,

Thank you to all that attended our monthly 10 Cents a Meal grantee meeting on Tuesday, March 18! Attached are the MDE slides covered in the meeting.

May Tsupros at MSU Center for Regional Food Systems, our evaluation and reporting survey partner, shared about the Lake Michigan School Food System Innovation Hub grants. Thanks, May! The Innovation Hub funds community-driven collaborations that help reimagine school meals. You can read more about the Innovation Hub at innovateschoolfood.org. Are you interested in connecting with the Michigan State Lead Team to learn more about the Innovation Hub, grants, and resources available to you? Complete the interest form here: [Michigan Interest Form for the Lake MI School Food System Innovation Hub](#)

Do you want to share about your success highlighting Michigan-grown produce and 10 Cents a Meal, and any suggestions that you may have for other grantees? Please let us know. We would love to have you share your story at one of our upcoming monthly grantee meetings!

If you were not able to attend March's grantee meeting, our next monthly grantee meeting will be on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 2:00pm EST via Zoom. These monthly grantee meetings are not required and are just an additional resource for grantees. Register for April's meeting here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/gBft0GZIS06DQcCo97aKPg#/registration>

Below are some key dates coming up for 10 Cents a Meal, and other important program updates.

Grant Award Reallocation

As we mentioned in the February grantee meeting, we were able to reallocate funding from other sources to offer supplemental funds to grantees that spend a majority of their grant award by May 2025!

To be eligible for supplemental funds, please make sure that you are up to date on submitting your September 2024-May 2025 local purchases in GEMS/MARS by Monday, May 19, 2025. Amounts included will be used to help determine reallocation. We will automatically increase or decrease awards using our available funds. It is extremely important that we spend our entire annual budget this year to protect future funding.

Grantees will have the opportunity to amend their application after June to request a change to the automatic reallocation. As you determine the best award amount for the remainder of the year, please include purchases that you plan to make through September 30, 2025, in your calculations. Additionally, remember that your past spending performance will be included in your program eligibility for next program year. We will give preference to grantees that demonstrate the ability to spend most or all of their award.

Reporting Survey II

Reporting survey II will be available on Monday, April 14, 2025. These reporting surveys help us respond to the requirement to report to the Legislature, and just as importantly, receive feedback from you. Payments cannot be processed for grantees with incomplete reporting surveys.

On April 14, the link to reporting survey II will be emailed to the main contact listed on your organization's 2024-2025 10 Cents a Meal application cover page in NexSys. If you need assistance with updating a cover page contact, please reach out to us.

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards Informational Webinar

Are you blazing new trails or using innovative strategies to improve school meals? We encourage you to apply for a Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award! A variety of recognition awards are possible, including Breakfast or Lunch Trailblazer, Innovative School Lunch Makeover, Innovation in Preparation of School Meals, and Innovation in Nutrition Education.

Our office is hosting a webinar on Wednesday, April 16 at 2:30-3:30pm EST where you can learn more information about how to apply and hear the stories of other Michigan schools that have received the award. Register for the HMI Recognition Awards Informational Webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/guErsoWvSzuyV3K6-2MPzA>

Tech Tip: GEMS/MARS Access

GEMS/MARS is where you submit your local food and transportation and labor expenses for 10 Cents a Meal. GEMS/MARS is accessed through [MiLogin for Business](#). Please check that you have completed each of the steps listed below so that you have the necessary access to submit your 10 Cents a Meal purchases.

Our [10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids & Farms Purchase Submission Walkthrough](#) is an excellent resource that goes over these steps and the overall purchase submission process.

1. If you do not have a MiLogin for Business account, you will first need to [create a MiLogin for Business Account](#).
2. To get GEMS/MARS added to your MiLogin for Business account, you must [request access to GEMS/MARS](#). Please note, this is a link to GEMS/MARS. It does not give you access to the 10 Cents a Meal tasks.
3. To submit your 10 Cents a Meal purchases in GEMS/MARS, you need access to the 10 Cents a Meal submission tasks:

- For local food purchases, the 2024-2025 task is called *Local Food Purchases: The 10 Cents a Meal Submission window for 2024-2025 has been opened. Click here to start a new submission.*
- The 2024-2025 task for food transportation and labor expenses is separate from the local food purchases task and is called *Local Food Transportation and Labor Expenses: The 10 Cents a Meal Submission window for 2024-2025 has been opened. Click here to start a new submission.*
- For returning grantees, both tasks should have been automatically added to your GEMS/MARS account. If you are new to the 10 Cents a Meal program for 2024-2025 or did not participate in 2023-2024, you will need to complete [the task access request form in GEMS/MARS.](#)
- If you are not granted the 10 Cents a Meal tasks within 48 hours of submitting your request form, please email mde-gems-ohns@michigan.gov and ask for assistance.

Once you have the necessary access, you can submit your local food and local food transportation and labor expenses in GEMS/MARS using the template for each. Our upload templates and purchase submission resources are available in the 10 Cents a Meal section of the MDE website: [Forms and Instructions](#)

Payments

Approved purchase data submitted through March 17, 2025, will be reimbursed in the April 2025 payment. We recommend submitting purchases in GEMS/MARS monthly so that you can keep track of your budget for the grant. See [24-25 Program Year Payment and Fiscal Information](#) for more details on the timeline and accounting for the grant.

We hope that this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at MDE-FarmToProgram@Michigan.gov or schedule a virtual Teams meeting with us by using our [Microsoft Bookings](#) page.

Sincerely,

Cheyenne, Megan, and Wendy