



Audience: National School Lunch Program Sponsors

Updated April 2024

Office of Nutrition Services Paid Lunch Equity Communication School Year 2024-2025

The School Year (SY) 2024-2025 Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool and guidance have been released. Please read all the requirements and information regarding the exemption before completing the PLE Tool. Sponsors that opt into Michigan School Meals or who are CEP district wide are considered non-pricing and are exempt from PLE requirements (pending official funding of Michigan School Meals for SY 2024-2025).

What are the requirements for SY 2024-2025?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released a PLE Exemption for qualifying School Food Authorities (SFAs) in [USDA Memo SP 14-2024](#) for SY 2024-2025. There are different PLE requirements depending on an SFA's fund balance level as of June 30, 2023. The Office of Nutrition Services (ONS) will collect data on the use of the PLE Exemption through a PLE Poll in the Fall of 2024.

SFAs with a Positive or Zero Fund Balance

- Are **exempt** from PLE requirements for SY 2024-2025 per USDA Memo SP 14-2024
- Do not have to complete the PLE Tool
- Do not have to raise paid student meal prices unless they choose to
- Documentation required and collected in future Resource Management Reviews:
 1. Non-profit School Food Service Account (NSFSA) Fund balance as of June 30, 2023
 - Updated Detailed General Ledger for the NSFSA/Food Service Fund (Fund 25) that clearly indicates the fund balance
 2. SY 2024-2025 PLE Tool in excel format (if prices are raised)
 3. Paid student prices before and after price increase (if prices are raised)
- Report the use of the PLE exemption to ONS in the PLE Poll in the Fall of 2024

SFAs with a Negative Fund Balance

- Must complete the PLE Tool
- Must raise paid lunch prices if the completed PLE Tool indicates a price increase is required for your SFA
 1. If a price increase is required for your SFA it will be indicated on the “SY 24-25 Price Raise Calculator” Tab of the PLE Tool
 2. Refer to the SY 2024-2025 PLE Tools Flowchart to determine how to meet the price increase requirement
 3. SFAs do not have to raise paid lunch prices by more than 10 cents for SY 2024-2025 if a price increase is necessary per your completed PLE Tool
 - SFAs can still choose to raise the price by more than 10 cents
- Use pricing/sales data from October 2023
- Documentation required and collected in future Resource Management Reviews:
 1. SY 2024-2025 PLE Tool in excel format
 2. Non-profit School Food Service Account (NSFSA) Fund balance as of June 30, 2023
 - Updated Detailed General Ledger for the NSFSA/Food Service Fund (Fund 25) that clearly indicates the fund balance
 3. Paid student prices before and after price increase
- Report paid student prices and price increase information to ONS in the PLE Poll in the Fall of 2024

The SY 2024-2025 PLE Tool and other related resources are available on our Resource Management page underneath the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) section: [Resource Management \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/resource-management)

Questions about the PLE Tool, and exemption can be sent to the Fiscal Monitoring Team at MDE-Fiscal@Michigan.gov.

Questions and Answers:

Q: I am CEP Districtwide; do I have to complete the PLE Tool?

A: No, the PLE Tool is not applicable to SFAs that are CEP in every building of the school district.

Q: I am participating in Michigan School Meals (30d state funding), does PLE pertain to me?

A: No, sponsors that participate in Michigan School Meals are considered non-pricing and are exempt from PLE requirements. (pending official funding of Michigan School Meals for SY 2024-2025).

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

A: The first two tabs within the PLE Tool are “Guidance” and “Instructions” which will help get you started. Stuck after reviewing those tabs? 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: The SY 2024-2025 PLE Tool is available on our Resource Management page underneath the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) section: [Resource Management \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/resource-management)

Q: Where should I start on the PLE Tool?

A: The first two tabs within the PLE Tool are “Guidance” and “Instructions” which will help get you started. From there you must always start with the “SY24-25 Requirement Calculator” tab – Step 1. Scroll down to line 13 if you do not have the SY2023-24 Unrounded Price Requirement.

Q: I have an Excess Fund Balance; can I use that to pay for paid student meals?

A: No. Excess Fund Balances can never be used in place of collecting meal payments for paid eligible meals.

Q: Can I lower my paid lunch price for SY 2024-2025?

A: No. That flexibility has not been made available by USDA for SY 2024-2025.