

## Paid Lunch Equity Communication School Year 2023-2024

The School Year (SY) 2023-2024 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.

### What are the requirements for SY 2023-2024?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released a PLE Exemption for qualifying School Food Authorities (SFAs) in the [USDA Memo SP 11-2023 for SY 2023-2024](#). There are different PLE requirements depending on an SFA's fund balance level as of June 30, 2022. The Office of Health and Nutrition Services (OHNS) will collect data on the use of the PLE Exemption through a PLE Poll in the Fall of 2023.

#### SFAs with a Positive or Zero Fund Balance

- Are **exempt** from PLE requirements for SY 2023-2024 per USDA Memo SP 11-2023
- 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 Food Service Account (NFSA) Fund balance as of June 30, 2022
    - Updated Detailed General Ledger for the NFSA/Food Service Fund (Fund 25) that clearly indicates the fund balance
  2. SY 2023-2024 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 OHNS in the PLE Poll in the Fall of 2023

#### ^ & • Á ] Negative Fund Balance

- Must complete the PLE Tool
- Must adjust 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 23-24 Price Calculator" Tab of the PLE Tool
  2. There is no PLE waiver for SY 2023-2024
  3. SFAs do not have to raise paid lunch prices by more than 10 cents for SY 2023-2024 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 2022
- Documentation required and collected in future Resource Management Reviews:
  1. SY 2023-2024 PLE Tool in excel format
  2. Non-profit Food Service Account (NFSA) Fund balance as of June 30, 2022
    - Updated Detailed General Ledger for the NFSA/Food Service Fund (Fund25) that clearly indicates the fund balance
  3. Paid student prices before and after price increase

- Report paid student prices and price increase information to OHNS in the PLE Poll in the Fall of 2023

The SY 2023-2024 PLE Tool is available on our Resource Management page underneath the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) section: [Resource Management \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/ohns/Fiscal/Paid-Lunch-Equity-Guidance-for-SY-2023-2024-USDA-SP11-2023s.pdf?rev=1731bb16b8ee462f91a3e7d4da5f16ca&hash=F2E42412725191623C9DA8A202397218)<sup>ii</sup>

Questions about the PLE Tool, and exemption can be sent to the Fiscal Monitoring Team at [MDE-Fiscal@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDE-Fiscal@Michigan.gov).

### **Questions and Answers:**

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

**Answer:** PLE Instructions are on our Resource Management page underneath the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) section: [Resource Management \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/ohns/Fiscal/Paid-Lunch-Equity-Guidance-for-SY-2023-2024-USDA-SP11-2023s.pdf?rev=1731bb16b8ee462f91a3e7d4da5f16ca&hash=F2E42412725191623C9DA8A202397218). Please contact our Fiscal Monitoring Team at [MDE-Fiscal@michigan.gov](mailto:MDE-Fiscal@michigan.gov) or 517-241-5380.

**Question:** Where do I find the new PLE Tool?

**Answer:** The SY 2023-2024 PLE Tool is available on our Resource Management page underneath the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) section: [Resource Management \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/ohns/Fiscal/Paid-Lunch-Equity-Guidance-for-SY-2023-2024-USDA-SP11-2023s.pdf?rev=1731bb16b8ee462f91a3e7d4da5f16ca&hash=F2E42412725191623C9DA8A202397218)

**Question:** Where should I start on the PLE Tool?

**Answer:** You must always start with the Unrounded Requirement Finder tab – Step 1. Scroll down to line 16 if you do not have the SY2022-23 Unrounded Price Requirement.

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

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

**Question:** Can I lower my paid lunch price for SY23-24?

**Answer:** No. That flexibility has not been made available by the USDA for SY 23-24.

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

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

**Question:** What if Michigan passes Free Meals for all, how is PLE impacted?

**Answer:** The Paid Lunch Equity provision is a federal requirement. If Michigan officially adopts free meals legislation, the impact on PLE will be assessed and communicated.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/ohns/Fiscal/Paid-Lunch-Equity-Guidance-for-SY-2023-2024-USDA-SP11-2023s.pdf?rev=1731bb16b8ee462f91a3e7d4da5f16ca&hash=F2E42412725191623C9DA8A202397218>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/food/fiscal-admin/topics/resource-management>