



Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) News from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE)

January 29, 2026

Nutritious Meal Options Due to Unanticipated School Closures

When schools close unexpectedly – such as for extreme weather – there is an option to continue serving nutritious meals to students. Districts that have participated in the Summer Food Service Program within the past two years are able to serve meals at eligible sites when an unanticipated event causes a school building or a child care program to close temporarily.

The Michigan Department of Education has been approved for a series of waivers that allow for the service of meals during a school shutdown with or without virtual learning for up to 10 consecutive days. Approvals for the waiver flexibilities will be made by MDE on a case-by-case basis. The waivers are available through June 30, 2026. You can find more information on how to apply for the waiver on our website under [Unanticipated School Closure](#).

For more information, please contact MDE-SFSP@Michigan.gov.

Introducing the Office of Nutrition Services New Program Advisory Councils!

The MDE-ONS team is excited to announce the launch of two new Program Advisory Councils—one for school sponsors and one for community sponsors.

These councils create a valuable forum for collaboration between sponsors and ONS, focusing on:

- Sharing best practices
- Providing input on guidance, training, and resources
- Strengthening communication
- Building peer-to-peer support

Membership is voluntary and designed to represent the diversity of Michigan's child and household nutrition programs. For more information about the Advisory Councils, contact Deanne Kelleher at MDE-ONS@Michigan.gov. If you're passionate about shaping the future of child nutrition and supporting programs statewide, **apply today!**

[School Advisory Council Nomination Form](#)

[Community Advisory Council Nomination Form](#)

Help Shape Michigan's School Meals Program

MDE and the American Institutes for Research (AIR)[®] are inviting Food Service Directors to share insights on implementing on School Meals Programs within Michigan. Your perspective will help identify what's working, where additional support is needed, and how the program impacts students, staff, and families.

Participation involves a 45-minute virtual interview scheduled at your convenience. Participation is **confidential**; reports will not identify individuals or schools.

Take part: <https://schoolmealstudy.short.gy/interest>

Questions? schoolmealstudy@air.org

Important Update to Federal Procurement Thresholds

The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has increased the micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds ([48 CFR 2.101](#)). The increases took effect on **October 1, 2025**.

- **Federal Micro-purchase threshold:** raised to \$15,000
- **Federal Simplified Acquisition (Small Purchase) threshold:** raised to \$350,000

This update applies to all Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

As a reminder, local agencies may set lower micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds than the federal limits. Sponsors are required to follow the most restrictive threshold in all situations.

Please visit the [MDE Procurement and Contracts](#) website for a variety of resources and guidance related to procurement. For questions related to thresholds or general procurement questions, please email MDE-CNP-Procurement@Michigan.gov.

Self-Monitoring

The School Nutrition Program (SNP) Sponsor-Level Self-Monitoring, School-Level Self-Monitoring (including National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs), On-Site Review, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Forms (if applicable) must be completed annually by **February 1, 2026**.

- [SNP Sponsor Level Self-Monitoring Form](#)
- [SNP School-Level Self-Monitoring Form](#)
- [FFVP School Self-Monitoring Form](#)

For more information, please visit the [Self-Monitoring website](#) and [Food Service Administrative Memo No. 4 - Monitoring Requirements for School Nutrition Programs](#).

Food Safety Inspections

As a friendly reminder, all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) are required to obtain two food safety inspections each school year. This requirement applies to all sites where food is prepared and/or served, including service-only locations, sites receiving vended meals, and those classified as "low-risk" by food safety inspection agencies. This requirement also applies to Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs). The scope of the inspection may vary depending on the type of food service operation as determined by the agency responsible for conducting the inspections. However, all participating schools must request two food safety inspections annually, regardless of the scope or perceived level of risk.

If a school is unable to obtain one or both required inspections, it must request a written denial from the inspection agency, including the reason for the denial, and retain that documentation on file. Please note that the cost of food safety inspections is an allowable expense under the Nonprofit School Food Service Account (NSFSA). Therefore, cost is not a valid justification for failing to obtain the required inspections.

For more information, please review the [Food Safety Requirements in School Meal Programs Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#).

Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act

Sponsors are now allowed to serve whole milk or 2% milk as part of the National School Lunch Program only. No change to your current milk offerings is required. For more information on the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, see the [January 15, 2026 CNP Bulletin No. 25](#).

Plant-Based Recipes Available

Kentwood Public Schools and Oak Park Schools were awarded a grant in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 State Aid budget to do a plant-based meal pilot. Both districts created a plan to develop recipes for their students. They worked hard last year to make it a reality. The new recipes are finished and posted on the MDE [Resources](#) website.

Non-Congregate Meals during Ramadan

A waiver is available to serve non-congregate meals to students who are fasting in observance of Ramadan February 17 through March 19, 2026. More information is available in the [December 19, 2025 CNP Bulletin No. 22](#).

Professional Standards

The United States of Department of Agriculture (USDA) has set minimum Professional Standards for professionals who work in School Nutrition Programs (SNP).

Annual Training Requirements for SNP Professionals

Directors and Contract Overseers	Managers	Food Service Staff, Full Time	Food Service Staff, Part-Time
		≥ 20 hours per week	< 20 hours per week
12 Hours	10 Hours	6 Hours	4 Hours

The annual training requirements displayed in the chart above apply to the twelve months between July 1st and June 30th of each year. Employees hired on January 1st or later only need half of the required training hours.

Professional Standards guidance and resources for special scenarios are available on the MDE Food and Nutrition Programs [Professional Standards](#) and [Training](#) websites.

Online Training Module Certificates

The online training module certificates have all been fixed and are working correctly. Thank you for your patience while we made the necessary updates. If you ever have issues with online training modules, please email MDE-ONS-Training@Michigan.gov.

New Online Training Module

[At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program](#) is the newest online training module. Learn if this is a program that could be offered to your students.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

FFVP grantees are encouraged to follow the [FFVP claim schedule](#) and if behind, must get caught up on drawdowns in NexSys. Grantees seeking guidance on this process are encouraged to attend the Tuesday at 2 on NexSys access and drawdowns on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 2pm. ([Registration](#)).

When a school's FFVP award is exhausted, the program must stop unless the school elects to continue the program with alternative, non-federal funds such as the General Fund. After FFVP funds are used up, any additional funds used to serve FFVP snacks are considered "non-program foods" and are not an allowable cost to the Non-Profit School Food Service Account (NSFSA).

Questions about the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program can be emailed to: MDE-FFVP@Michigan.gov.

Section 164k – Compliance with School Meal Programs, Incentives for Pupil Count Days, District Surveys, Evidence-Based Curriculum List

The Office of Nutrition Services (ONS) has received lots of questions about language in Public Act 15 Section 164k that requires MDE to confirm any violation or noncompliance as it relates to the legislated requirements. If the department receives a report and confirms that a violation occurred, MDE is required by law to withhold 5% of relevant funding for as long as the district or ISD is out of compliance. Memo [2025-110 Section 164k – Compliance with School Meal](#)

[Programs, Incentives for Pupil Count Days, District Surveys, Evidence-Based Curriculum List](#) provides clarification for the language in Public Act 15 Section 164k.

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms Updates

10 Cents a Meal Coalition

In response to 10 Cents a Meal funding for Fiscal Year 2026 (31j) not being included in the State School Aid budget, Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities has recently launched a 10 Cents a Meal coalition.

The coalition will meet virtually once a month for one hour during the Monday-Friday work week. The purpose of these meetings is to bring interested participants together to stay up to date on the status of the 10 Cents a Meal program, share success stories, and develop a strategy for moving forward.

If you are interested in joining, you can complete Groundwork's [10 Cents a Meal Coalition](#) form. For questions, please contact Groundwork's Policy Specialist, Amanda Brezzell, at amanda.brezzell@groundworkcenter.org.

Starting a School or Community Garden: Essential Steps for Success Course Opportunity

Michigan State University Extension's Community Food Systems and Consumer Horticulture teams recently developed a free, self-paced course for those interested in starting a community or school garden, as well as those that have just started a garden project. In this course, participants will learn about:

- Managing Gardens
- Garden Goals
- Gathering Champions and Support
- Garden Management and Decision Making
- Garden Sustainability and Funding
- Garden Planning
- Site Selection
- Soil Overview
- Basics of Plant Selection
- Garden Problem Solving
- Real-world examples from real school and community gardens

This course will take approximately 5-7 hours to complete. Participants who wish to receive a certificate can do so by completing the final quiz.

For more information and to register, please visit [Starting a School or Community Garden: Essential Steps for Success - Community Gardening](#).

Ongoing Social Media Campaign: What's for Lunch?

MDE is running a social media campaign that highlights the great lunches being served throughout our state. It highlights lunches being served in the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program. Get involved by showing off the great lunches being served. Please share your pictures and story by filling out the form at the link below. Pictures will be shared on [MDE's Facebook Page](#). MDE appreciates all who have submitted photos. Please watch this video from the Georgia Department of Education on [How to Take GREAT School Meal Photos](#). We want to ensure the photos that you submit are appealing and representative of all the healthy and innovative lunches served across the state.

[What's For Lunch?](#)

Upcoming Events

Town Hall

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Time: 2 PM

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3XE53r-JT4S-A0-OyMJ4kg

Training Corner

2026 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Annual Training: Plan Ahead!

Please save the date for 2026 SFSP annual training! The SFSP team has put together engaging, interactive training designed to equip you for a great summer season. Participants will learn about the newest program rules and key steps for managing a successful SFSP operation. The session is free of charge, and there are restaurants close by where you can buy lunch. Keep in mind that sponsors must complete in-person training at least once every three years to stay compliant, and attendance is mandatory for all new SFSP sponsors. We are excited to have you join us! Contact the SFSP team at MDE-SFSP@Michigan.gov for questions.

Thursday, March 12, 2026 – [Macomb ISD, Clinton Township, MI](#)

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 – [MDOT Aeronautics Auditorium, Lansing, MI](#)

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 - [Forrest Hills Fine Arts Center, Grand Rapids MI](#)

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 - [Wayne RESA, Annex Building, Wayne MI](#)

Wednesday, April 29, 2026 - [Kirtland University Center, Gaylord, MI](#)

Monday, May 18, 2026 - [Marquette-Alger RESA, Marquette, MI](#)

School Meals Overview Workshop

June date added in Big Rapids!

Tuesday, June 16, 2026- Day 1: [Register Here](#)

Wednesday, June 17, 2026 - Day 2: [Register Here](#)

Tuesday at 2

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 -2pm- NexSys Access and Drawdowns: [Register here](#)

Tuesday, February 10, 2026 -2pm- Excess Fund Balance: [Register here](#)

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 -2pm- Procurement Series - Food Service Contracts and Renewal Procedures: [Register here](#)

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 -2pm- Smart Snacks: [Register here](#)

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 -2pm- Food Safety Plan: [Register here](#)

Thinking Thursday

Thursday, February 19, 2026 -2pm- At Risk Afterschool Program: [Register here](#)

Contact Us

Email: MDE-SchoolNutrition@Michigan.gov

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-](mailto:MDE-SchoolNutrition@Michigan.gov)

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-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](http://www.Michigan.gov/MDE-FoodServiceContracts)

Email: [MDE-FSMC-](mailto:MDE-FSMC-Vended@Michigan.gov)

Vended@Michigan.gov

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1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

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