



Child Nutrition & Wellness

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March Update

Distributed to the School Nutrition Program Authorized Representatives Listserv
and the Food Service Directors Listserv
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Additional Equipment Grants

Kansas will receive approximately \$225,000 in federal funds for additional food service equipment grants. We are waiting to learn whether this funding will be limited to only those sponsors that did NOT receive an ARRA grant for equipment in 2009. We will first reconsider applications already on file from the spring 2009 ARRA equipment grant process. Once again, priority will be given to schools with 50% or more of students eligible for reduced price or free school meals. The percentage of students eligible for reduced price or free meals will be updated based upon fall 2009 enrollment. By early April, applicants with the highest scores on their equipment grant applications will be invited to submit new price quotes for equipment items that are still needed. At that time, new applications will also be invited IF the total amount of funds available cannot be awarded using applications already on file.

Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

Funds are available for approximately 100 elementary schools to participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) during school year 2010-2011.

Over 60 schools are currently receiving additional funds to offer free fresh fruits and vegetables to students in one or more areas at times other than meal service periods. Up to \$75 total per student is available for the period July 2010 through June 2011.

Participation in the FFVP is limited to elementary schools with priority given to those with 50 percent or more of students eligible for reduced price or free school meals.

Priority will also be given to schools that establish partnerships with non-federally funded organizations to provide additional resources to implement the program.

All related documents are posted on www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, Guidance, Food Service Facts, Chapter 32. These materials include the FFVP:

- School Handbook
- School Application
- School Selection Criteria
- Program Agreement Addendum
- Reimbursement Claim

To apply for the FFVP, complete the application and return it to KSDE no later than May 3, 2010. Schools selected to participate will be notified by June 1, 2010. Participating schools will be reimbursed for their documented expenses on a monthly basis.

At least 90 percent of FFVP funds must be used for operating costs which include:

- Food (fruits, vegetables, limited dips and condiments)
- Nonfood items (napkins, paper plates, serving bowls, trays, cleaning supplies, trash bags)
- Value-added services (pre-cut produce, ready-made produce trays, delivery charges)
- Salaries and fringe benefits for employees who do such tasks as washing and chopping produce, preparing trays, distributing produce to students, setting up kiosks and cleaning up

Up to 10 percent of FFVP funds may be used for administrative costs which include documented expenses for program planning, managing paperwork, obtaining equipment and all other aspects of the FFVP that are not directly related to preparation and service of fruits and vegetables.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 785-296-2276 or your area's KSDE child nutrition consultant.

Scheduling Body Venture for 2010-11

Body Venture is KSDE's traveling health education exhibit for students in grades K-5. Each year this exciting exhibit visits approximately 100 schools and helps students learn why it is so important to "Eat Smart. Play Hard." To learn more about the exhibit and to request a visit, go to www.bodyventure.org, Schedule. Requests for 2010-11 visits must be received by April 30, 2010.

Summertime Success

If you aren't already serving nutritious meals during the summer, now is the time to consider that possibility. Kansas kids need summer nutrition because hunger doesn't take a vacation. Providing healthful meals can help maintain students' learning readiness, provide a safe place for children to interact with other kids and supportive adults, allow families to stretch their food dollars, employ staff in the summer, maximize use of otherwise idle buildings, bring money to the community, and build community partnerships.

The **Simplified Summer Option** provides for seamless operation of the School Nutrition Programs at sites with 50% or more of students eligible for reduced price or free school meals. All students will be served free of charge and meals will be reimbursed at the free rates for breakfast and/or lunch.

The **Summer Food Service Program** (SFSP) operates under different, although very similar, rules. Reimbursement rates are higher which helps to compensate for making a few operational changes. All meals are served free of charge to eligible children at participating sites.

All documents needed to initiate or renew SFSP participation are available at www.kn-eat.org, Summer Food Service Program. If you have questions about the SFSP or the Simplified Summer Option, please contact our office or your area consultant.

School Breakfast Waivers

Eating breakfast is one of the best ways to assure that students are healthy and able to achieve their full potential. All Kansas public schools are required by State law to participate in the School Breakfast Program unless they meet the following criteria and receive an annual waiver from the Kansas State Department of Education.

Fewer than 35% of students in attendance at the school building during March of the current academic year are eligible for free or reduced price meals **AND**

1. The school building does offer the School Breakfast Program and meets the following criteria:

- Breakfast is available, but student participation is low.
- The school principal must attest that breakfast is available to all students in the building.
- The school principal must attest that parents and students receive regular reminders of the availability of breakfast at school.
- The school principal must attest that bus and class schedules allow students a minimum of 15 minutes to eat breakfast at school.
- The school breakfast average daily participation in March of the current school year must be less than 25% of the number of students eligible for reduced price and free meals.

OR

2. The school building does not offer the School Breakfast Program and meets the following criteria:

- There is documented evidence that there is no need for the School Breakfast Program.
- The school must specify the policy and procedures that allow morning nutrition to be provided in that building to any student who needs it.

Waiver Request forms for the 2010-2011 school year are available at www.kn-eat.org, **School Nutrition Programs, Administration, Breakfast Waivers**. If you have questions about the waiver process, please contact our office at 785-296-2276 or your area's KSDE child nutrition consultant.

Food Recall Update

The recall of beef and veal produced through Huntington Meat Packing, Inc. of Montebello, California was the largest in recent months. The recall notices are not always clear on where the items were distributed or even on the brand names of the products involved. Sometimes the announcement states that it is nationwide, but the product may not be distributed in all states. We will post any recall that might be of concern to schools or child care providers at www.kn-eat.org, Food Safety. However, for complete information on all recalls, you are encouraged to visit the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service's website: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/FSIS_Recalls/index.asp.

Training Pays!

In these uncertain times, it is more important than ever to make the best use of limited resources. Sending employees to training continues to be a good investment. Well trained employees are the key to high quality and cost effective Child Nutrition Programs.

This spring and summer, KSDE will offer a full schedule of Leadership Connections, Child Nutrition Management Academy classes, menu planning classes and administrative workshops. In addition, we continue to work with Regional Training Cooperatives (RTCs) to assure that

classes tailored to local needs are available across the state. RTC classes are conveniently located, inexpensive and cover a wide variety of relevant topics.

We strongly encourage you and your staff members to participate. We also suggest that employees are paid to attend and that hourly wages or salaries are linked to completion of professional development activities. The benefits to your program will far outweigh the costs!

Spring Leadership Connections Meetings

This spring's meetings will explore common "Myths and Misunderstandings" about school nutrition programs. We will also be distributing some beautiful new posters that will brighten up your cafeteria while providing nutrition education. There will be announcements and recognition awards, and as always, there will be great opportunities for professional networking. Letters announcing the meeting dates and locations were mailed in early March. Plan now to attend!

Child Nutrition Management Academy & Regional Training Cooperative Classes

This June, we will offer both Child Nutrition Management Academy and Regional Training Cooperative (RTC) classes at five locations. This means that relevant training for **all** food service employees will be available at a convenient regional location. We hope this approach will make it practical for employees to share transportation and reduce the costs of attending training. Dates and locations are as follows:

- June 8-11: Kansas City, Haysville, Hays
- June 16-19: Garden City, Iola

The following classes will be offered:

- Personnel Management 1
- Controlling Costs in the Kitchen
- Managing Service
- Exceeding Customer Expectations
- Effective Financial Management
- Implementing HACCP in Kansas
- Managing Production
- Special Diets
- Training for Success
- Food Service Sanitation
- Food Based Menu Planning and Production Records
- Nutrient Standard Menu Planning and Production Records

Each of the above classes provides six to 12 hours of training. In addition, there will be a selection of RTC classes (one to three hours in length) offered at each location. The full class schedule and registration will be available around the first of April at www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, 5-Star Training System.

Jump Start! – Orientation Classes for Food Service Managers & Directors

New managers and directors need all the help they can get to successfully manage these complex programs. Jump Start! classes are designed to give a quick overview of program responsibilities. Participants will receive valuable tips, guidance and ideas. They will also meet people who can be of help for years to come. Each class will be taught by a team of KSDE's child nutrition consultants. Both classes will be offered on September 22-23 at the Cross Wind Conference Center in Hesston, Kansas. For more information, go to www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, What's New, Professional Development & Training.

SNA-KS Professional Development Workshop

The School Nutrition Association of Kansas invites you to come to Olathe for fun and professional learning on April 23-24. There will be a mini food show, education sessions and leadership training. For more information and registration forms, go to www.sna-ks.org.

Kansas Nutrition Council Annual Conference

"Igniting Your Nutrition Messages...Light a Fire in You and Your Messages" is the theme for this year's Kansas Nutrition Council Annual Conference. The event will be held on Thursday, April 15 at the K-State Student Union in Manhattan. The conference brochure and registration information are available at <http://www.sne.org/KansasNutritionCouncil.htm>.

Wellness Policy Data – Statewide Averages are Posted

To view current data on statewide average scores for each content area of the Kansas School Wellness Policy Model Guidelines, go to www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, Wellness Policies. We are very excited to see the improvement in scores between 2006 and 2009! How is your sponsor doing in comparison to the rest of the State? To find out, go to KN-CLAIM and access the Wellness Policy Builder. Make a screen print of the summary page for your sponsor (i.e. the screen showing scores for each content area). Then compare the sponsor's summary to the statewide summary data.

As the school year begins to wind down, it is a great time for the School Wellness Policy Committee/School Health Council to evaluate and update the current Wellness Policy Implementation Plans for your sponsor. KSDE consultants will look at these plans during reviews of your program. Sponsors should be making continual progress towards creating healthier school environments by setting incremental objectives that are realistic and reachable.

New Features on Our Website

We will be happy to post **free-of-charge advertisements for child nutrition job openings and food service equipment for sale**. Email your advertisements to Paula Tryon at ptryon@ksde.org.

A link has been added to the **USDA quantity recipes** which are posted on the National Food Service Management Institute's website. To access the recipes, go to www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, Guidance, Menu Planning & Production Records.

Free Wellness Resource for Parents

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation have a wonderful free booklet called “Be Well. Messages from Moms on Living Healthier Lives”. Copies are available in English and Spanish. Schools can go online at www.BeWellBook.org to order their free copies. The book has a full-color cover and 76 pages of stories about mothers who have changed their families’ lives. Martha Lawson, food service director in USD 260 Derby, reports that principals in her district have been able to order hundreds of copies of this book. Thanks to Martha for telling us about this resource.

IMPORTANT!!! Direct Certification Letters Eliminated

In 2008, KSDE implemented its web-based Direct Certification system to enable sponsors to more easily identify students who are automatically eligible for free meals because they receive Food Assistance or Temporary Assistance to Families (TAF). The response of school personnel to this system has been overwhelmingly positive. USDA is also very pleased with the system and recently recognized Kansas as one of six states with best practices for Direct Certification. The advantages of the system are that it’s fast and easy to use, and results in more eligible students being certified.

For the past two years, we have operated a dual Direct Certification system that included both the web-based system and letters sent to households receiving Food Assistance or TAF. Last year we mailed over 40,000 letters to households. To reduce costs, letters will not be sent to households this year and use of the web-based Direct Certification system is required. Direct Certification is not an option, it is a USDA requirement.

If your sponsor has not yet begun using the web-based system, now is the time to get started. This way you will be ready when the July list of eligible students is available. A quick reference for the Direct Certification system is available at www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, Guidance, KN-CLAIM Quick References. Because the information contained in the Direct Certification system is highly confidential, access is through KSDE’s “Common Authentication” system. So allow for some lead time for your request for system access to be approved. We’ll be glad to help, if you have questions.

Parting Thoughts

Child Nutrition Programs are never more needed or valued than during tough economic times. Even with increased prices, school meals continue to provide a great value for families. The work you do every day is of critical importance to the success of schools because YOU prepare students to learn and make an immeasurably positive difference in their health and well-being. We greatly appreciate your hard work and dedication to serving Kansas kids! Thank you and Happy Spring!!!