



TABLE

TALK

VOLUME 006

ISSUE 003

October 1, 2026



Alabama State Department of Education
Child Nutrition, School Programs

Webex Recording

Click [here](#) to access the Webex recording.

OVERVIEW

- National School Lunch Week
- Table Talk Certificate Timeline
- Email Delivery System
- SWP Weekly Email
- Breakfast Grant Applications
- Severe Need and Two Cent Differential

Reviews and Reminders

Monthly Memos

- USDA
- ALSDE

- Nontraditional Students
- Inventory for 0141
- School Programs Area Map Update
- Leftovers and Donated Food Policy
- USDA Equipment Assistance Grant
- Emergency Procurement
- Farm to School Procurement
- Whole Milk Guidance
- Allergy Training
- Grant Opportunities
- Junior Chef
- FFVP
- Culinary Challenge
- Buy American Tracking
- Verification
- Inaccurate Guidance

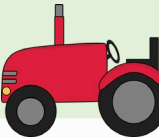
Top Topics

Training Tidbits

- Fall Conference Registration – October 23rd Deadline
- Farm to School Tour & Dinner Registration
- Save the Date for Spring Conference

- Kelvin Anderson, Anderson Farms

Farmer Spotlight



Salad Bar Raffle!



- 34 districts have entered to win!
- \$4,000 Value
- Donated by Hubert
- Winning district must secure transportation for pick-up from the Grand Hotel on Friday, 11/20/26.



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

SUZANNAH YODER

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS



During the weeklong celebration, school kitchens and their students will celebrate with special menus, events, activities, and much more, all with the goal of...

- Increasing student participation.
- Spreading the message to parents that you're serving healthy, delicious lunch at school.
- Earning media coverage from local papers, TV stations and bloggers.
- Connecting with teachers and administrators at your school or in your district to spread the word that school meals are healthy and delicious.



WE'D LOVE TO VISIT AND HELP PROMOTE YOUR PROGRAM.

[Fill out this survey to let us know your plans!](#)

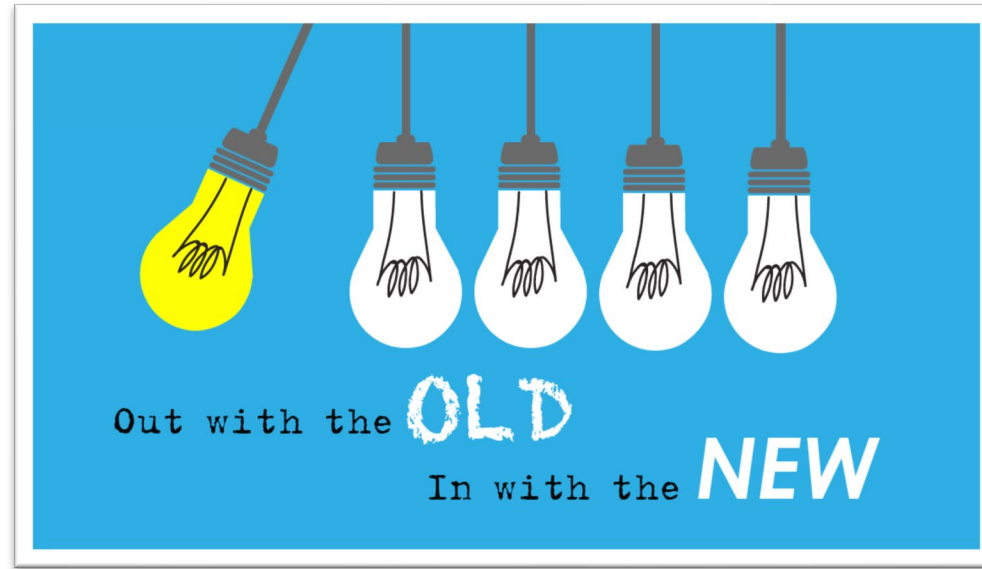
REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

We're thankful that so many directors take advantage of the recorded versions of Table Talk, watching the content when it fits into their schedule.

As a reminder, certificates are available only for webinars viewed within one month of their release, as the updates and information shared are often time-sensitive.



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS



As part of our ongoing efforts to improve communication and outreach, we are transitioning to a new email delivery system and have discontinued our previous platform. Until the transition is complete, all program communications will be distributed through Outlook email.

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS



Most recent email: 9/29/2026



BREAK for a PLATE
ALABAMA COMMUNITIES



THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION CONNECTION ALABAMA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS | FOOD DISTRIBUTION SECTION

Your Weekly Link to USDA Foods & Statewide Procurement



SY 26-27 Food Distribution Updat...
4 MB



USDA DoD Fresh Program Sweep ...
116 KB



Updated SWP Items September 2...
27 KB



ALSDE SWP Order Approval Guida...
287 KB



FFAVORS Login Instructions.pdf
167 KB



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

Thank you for sending in your Breakfast Grant Applications!

Grants were submitted with the goals to:

- Offset the **financial burden** on schools serving breakfast to all students, regardless of income eligibility.
- Ensure students across Alabama have access to nutritious morning **meals at no cost**.
- Promote student well-being through improved nutritional support by expanding access to breakfast through **alternate service models**.
- Strengthen infrastructure and capacity. Increase usage of minimally processed, **Alabama grown agriculture products**.

Grant applications are currently being scored, and award notifications are scheduled to be sent to applicants on **October 30, 2026**.



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS



An updated list of Sites that qualify for severe need and SFAs that qualify for 2 cent differential was sent out 9/29/2026. **Severe Need** and **Two-Cent Differential** provide additional federal reimbursement to qualifying SFAs and schools based on meal participation.

New Schools: Eligibility for new schools that are not participating in CEP will be determined after October claims are submitted. New schools require three months of meal service data to establish eligibility for the applicable additional reimbursement.

Errors: A few Severe Need Statuses are being corrected in Site Applications. If you had a site that was incorrectly labeled and getting the wrong reimbursement, you will see a claim revision for August.

[School Year 2026-2027 Two Cent Differential and Severe Need Reports - Break for a Plate Alabama](#)

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

DocuSign link will be coming soon!

Email contains the workbook and instructions to complete your Annual Report.

Be sure to:

- Check for receipt of the DocuSign. Contact cnpnslp@alsde.edu if you did not receive your copy.
- Read the instructions before you get started.
- Set up a time with your CSFO and financial staff at the district to complete the Annual Report collaboratively.

Due Date: January 15, 2027

Please note that the DocuSign and the CAP if applicable must be complete and approved by ALSDE School Program staff on or before January 15, 2027.

An SFA may be placed on withholding until an adequate and approved FY CNP Annual report is received and approved by ALSDE.

Instructional Department of

The amount reported for net cash resources must be supported by accounting records that properly identify AND RECORD CNP transactions in broad program revenue and expenditure categories such as salaries, fringe benefits, food, supplies, and equipment. All expenditures must be allowable CNP expenditures and must be properly supported by documentation. This report and corrective action plan(s) are due January 15th of each year.

FUND BALANCES AND RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

3	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (Per the October 2024 Claim)	5063
4	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 3602333.33
5	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 3437784.17
6	NET EXCESS/DEFICIT	\$ 164,549.16
7	TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1058363.42

Description	Account Code	
7 A. Inventory-Material & Supplies	0141	\$ 0
7 B. Inventory-Food	0143	\$ 150956.96
8 TOTAL ASSETS (Less Inventory)		\$ 907,406.46
9 TOTAL LIABILITIES		\$ 317806.71
10 NET CASH RESOURCES @ 8/30/2025		\$ 589,599.75
11 OPERATING MONTHS		11

(Enter only the number of months meals are served)

12 AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURES	\$ 312,525.83
13 THREE (3) MONTHS EXPENSES	\$ 937,577.49
14 OPERATING BALANCE (MONTHS)	1.89 Over 3 months No

(If the Operating Balance is greater than 3 months the SFA must submit a corrective action plan for ALSDE to review and approve along with this report)

REVENUE / EXPENDITURE RATIOS:

15 EXPENDITURES AS % OF TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 95.43
16 TOTAL FOOD EXPENDITURES	\$ 1770251.69
17 SWP REBATES	\$ 31814.38
18 OTHER REBATES (Systems that are not on SWP)	\$ 1661.71
19 NET FOOD EXPENDITURES	\$ 1,736,775.60
20 FOOD AS % OF TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 48.21
21 TOTAL LABOR EXPENDITURES	\$ 1351528.71
22 LABOR AS % OF TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 37.52

PRODUCTIVITY

23 TOTAL BREAKFAST SERVED	425878
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(Enter all breakfast meals claimed from October 1 through September 30, including Regular, Severe Need, and Seamless Summer Option Breakfast meals)

24 TOTAL LUNCH SERVED	456023
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(Enter all Lunch meals claimed from October 1 through September 30, including Regular, 2 cent Differential, and Seamless Summer Option Lunch meals)

25 TOTAL SNACK SERVED	55464
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(Enter all Lunch meals claimed from October 1 through September 30, including Area Eligible, Non-Area Eligible, and Seamless Summer Option Area Eligible Snack meals)

26 TOTAL NON-PROGRAM FOOD REVENUES	\$ 272,347.01
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(Enter the Total Non-Program Food Revenues: The total revenue from non-program food sales (e.g., LEA revenue function codes: 6730 "Daily Sales-A la Carte", 6740 "Daily Sales-Other", 6750 "Special Functions", 6760 "SFSP-Vending", 6765 "CACFP-Vending", and 6790 "Other Food Service Income," for the fiscal year.)



MONTHLY MEMOS

CHAD LANGSTON

TABLE TALK

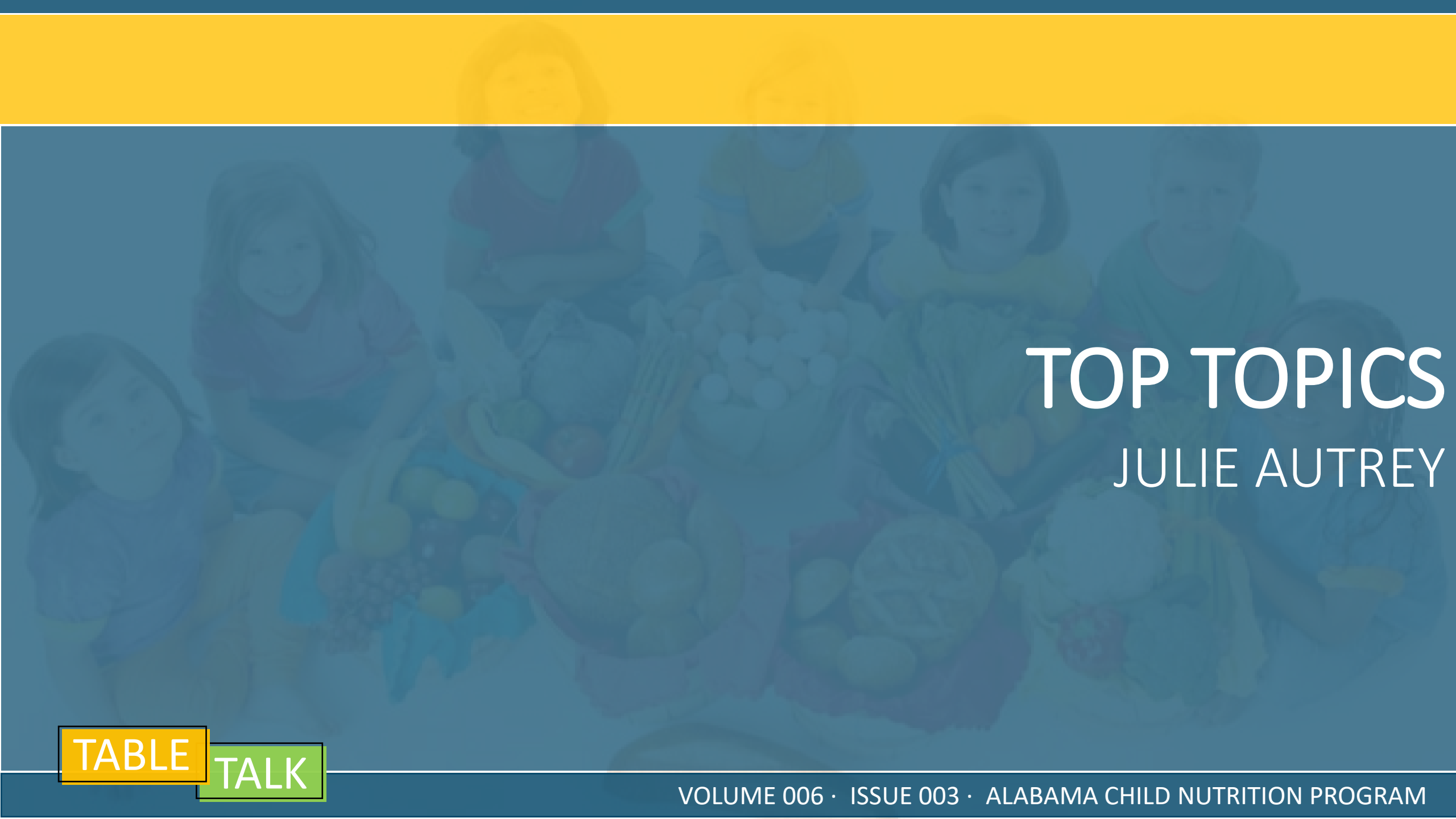
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MONTHLY MEMOS

- Fiscal Year 2026 Alabama School Breakfast Funding Allocation - 8/31/26
- Third Annual Supply Chain Symposium Registration – Live! – 8/31/26
- Reminder: Share Your NSLW 2026 Plans – Survey Closes September 24th – 8/31/26
- Upcoming HHS School Nutrition Grant Opportunity (DEPEND Initiative) – 9/4/26
- LINQ POS Failure – 9/4/26
- Early Bird Pricing Ends September 14 – National School District Wellness Coalition Convening -9/9/26
- Spanish Civil Rights Resources Available – 9/10/26
- LINQ POS Outage Follow-up – 9/11/26

MONTHLY MEMOS

- 2026 Child Nutrition Directors' Fall Conference -9/14/26
- Win a Salad Bar for Your District! -9/15/26
- Reminder: Early Bird Registration Ends in 3 Days – 9/15/26
- Annual Civil Rights Training Requirement for Program Year 2026-2027 – 9/16/26
- Reminder: FY 2026 School Breakfast Grant Applications Due September 30 – 9/29/26
- Promoting Real Food in Child Nutrition Programs – 9/29/26
- SY 2026-2027 Two Cent Differential and Severe Need Report – 9/29/26
- FY 2026 Year-End Inventory Resources and Reporting Guidance – 9/29/26



TOP TOPICS

JULIE AUTREY

TABLE TALK

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Reporting Inventory

To better clarify the information sent in the Year-End Inventory Resources and Reporting Guidance

For fiscal year-end inventory reporting, report the value of unused food, materials, supplies, smallwares, and non-capitalized equipment purchased during the current fiscal year that are on hand as of September 30 and available for future CNP use.

These amounts will be reported in the Total Assets section of the CNP Annual Report:

- **0143:** All unused purchased and USDA Foods
- **0141:** **Materials and Supplies purchased in the fiscal year and on hand for use in the next fiscal year**
 - Examples of items commonly included, but not limited to:
 - **Smallwares and non-capitalized equipment purchased in the current fiscal year**
 - Unused smallwares, including items stored in a central CNP warehouse
 - Disposable trays, plates, utensils, and napkins
 - Unused office and administrative supplies
 - Unused cleaning and sanitation supplies
 - Other unused consumable CNP supplies



Virtual, Hybrid, & Nontraditional Students

- **Students enrolled in a local virtual academy who are on site for tutoring, field trips, and special projects**
- **Students enrolled in school code 4999 in AIM**
 - Students who attend private schools and home school students enrolled in district for on-site for special services.
 - Pre-k students enrolled in the district for on-site special services.

ALSDE CNP has requested guidance from USDA regarding the provision of meals to non-traditional students. The request remains pending approval from the USDA National Office. In the meantime, USDA has provided a clear and definitive response regarding virtual schools.

While guidance is limited, the clearest direction the state can follow is that meals cannot be claimed for students who are not enrolled at an NSLP-participating school. We will update directors as soon as we receive guidance.

The key to students receiving reimbursable school meals is for the student to be enrolled in a school with an agreement to participate in the National School Lunch Program.

Emergency Procurement

If directors continue to have supply chain disruptions and need to purchase off bid, they should submit a letter requesting the use of emergency procurement.

EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT FOR SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS:

- All city or county board of education CNP Directors must immediately communicate with the local superintendent to inform them of the need for emergency procurement to purchase goods.
- The local superintendent will draft a letter to the state superintendent to request the use of emergency procurement.

The letter must contain a statement setting forth the specific facts regarding the basis of the unanticipated event causing the supply chain disruptions including:

- the geographical region or area to which the emergency should be limited,
- enrollment for the district, and
- average cost of the goods for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and/or other Child Nutrition Programs operated by the SFA.
- The state superintendent will make the recommendation to the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts.
- The Department of Examiners of Public Accounts will send a letter approving the request.

Emergency Procurement

Consistent with Federal procurement regulations at 2 CFR 200.318(i), SFAs should retain information, data, and documents, which qualify specific conditions and emergency circumstances resulted in the decision to use the emergency noncompetitive procurement method and the procurement process, itself. Failure to plan for transition to competitive procurement cannot be the basis for continued use of noncompetitive procurement based on exigency or emergency circumstances.

The SFAs should maintain documentation in their procurement files.

Documentation must include:

- Explanation of the rationale for the method of procurement
- Selection of contract type
- Contractor selection or rejection
- The basis for the contract price.

The following items are examples that would support the documentation requirements:

- Documentation showing the distributor, processor, or other supplier cancelled food or supply contracts, deliveries, or orders.
- Documentation showing the distributor, processor, or other supplier is no longer able to provide food as ordered or fail to consistently deliver goods.



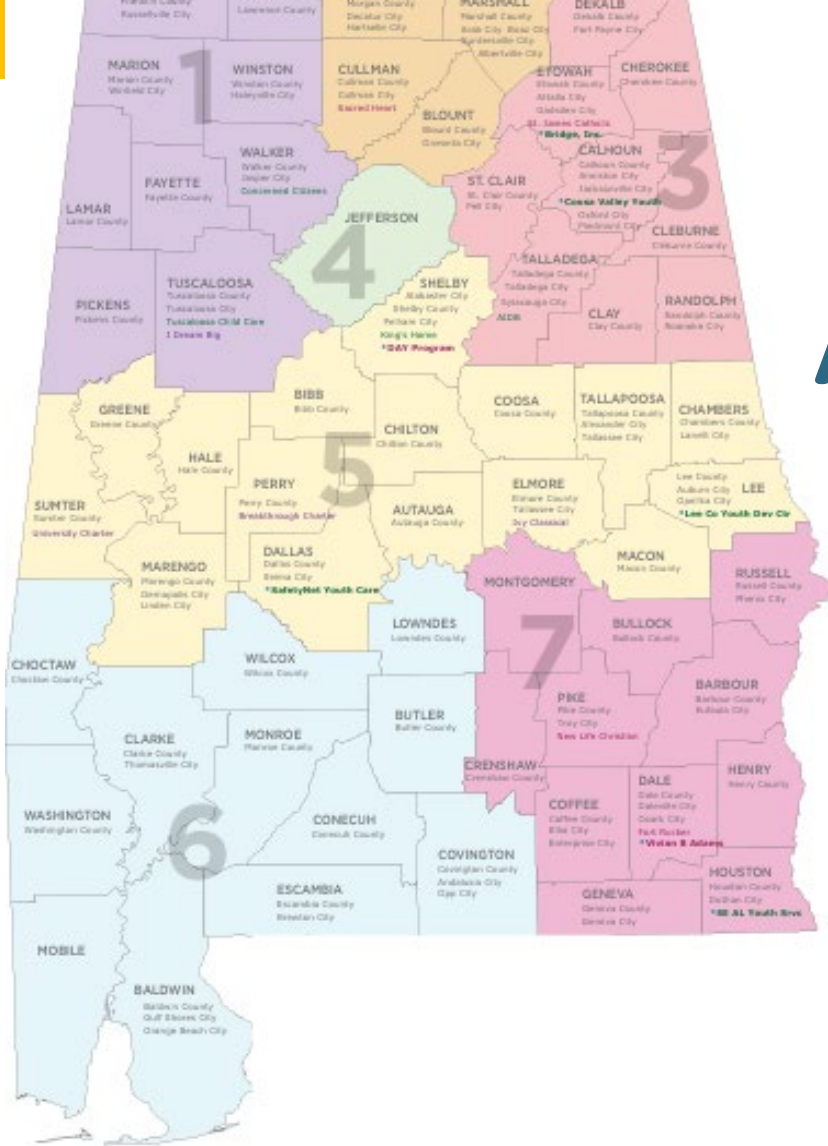
TOP TOPICS

SUZANNAH YODER

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School Programs Area Map Updates



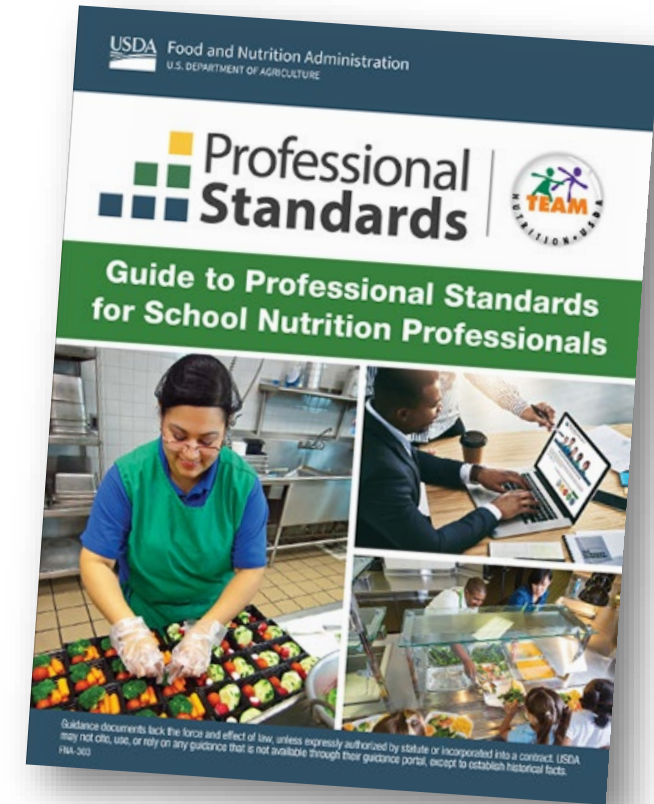
Area	Specialists
Area 1 North, West	Lori Ferguson Ellen Watson
Area 2 North, Central	Devin Williamson Ellen Watson
Area 3 North, East	Suzannah Yoder Ellen Watson
Area 4 Jefferson County	Rachel Fowler Christina Glover
Area 5 Central	Chad Langston Joe Clark
Area 6 South, West	Susanne Reeves Ashley Lankford
Area 7 South, East	Justin Hope Ashley Lankford

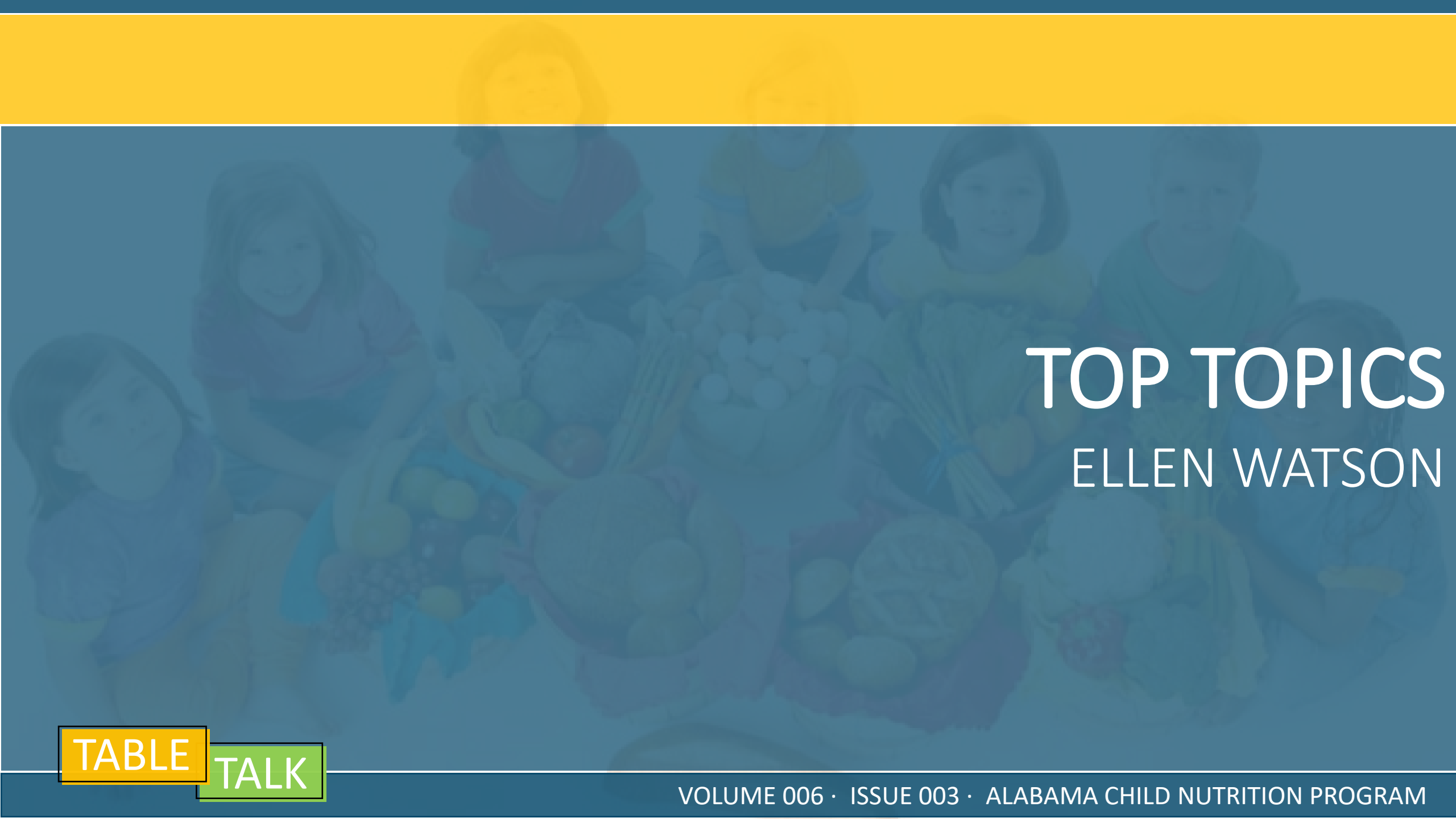
USDA Professional Standards Updates

Three USDA Professional Standards resources were recently revised to support school nutrition professionals:

- The [Summary of Professional Standards Flyer](#) is a quick-reference document outlining the Professional Standards training and hiring requirements.
- The [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) is a central resource that comprehensively outlines the USDA Professional Standards for State and local school nutrition program professionals.
- The [Professional Standards Training Reward Badges](#) packet includes ideas and badges which promote training and recognize staff who have completed their annual requirements.

If you are not familiar with the [Professional Standards Trainings and Tracker Tool](#) (PSTTT) now is a great time to check out this free online tool.





TOP TOPICS

ELLEN WATSON

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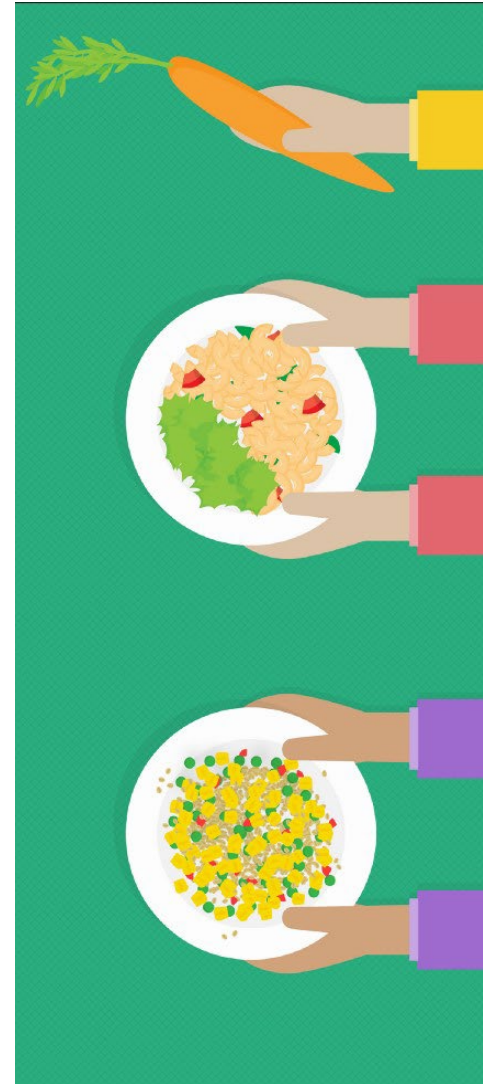
LEFTOVERS & DONATING FOOD POLICY

Schools May Donate Surplus Food

- Leftover prepared or unprepared food may be donated to eligible nonprofit organizations outside of or within the SFA when permitted by local health department regulations and SFA procedures.
- Eligible recipients include food banks, homeless shelters, CACFP centers, and other 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

Requirements

- Local health department approval is required.
- SFAs must have food donation procedures in their HACCP plan, including recordkeeping, food allergy considerations, and time/temperature controls.
- Donated food provided to students must be free of charge and distributed in a manner that protects student confidentiality.



LEFTOVERS & DONATING FOOD POLICY

Priorities for Program Integrity

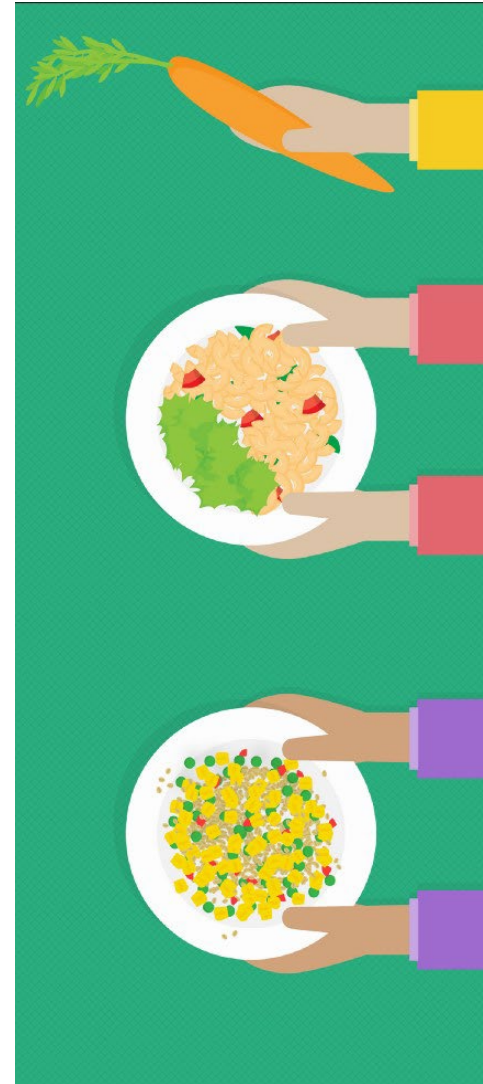
1. CNP directors should monitor surplus food donations to guard against potential overproduction for the purpose of donation.
2. If a school has a surplus of food on a frequent basis, menu planning and production practices should be adjusted.

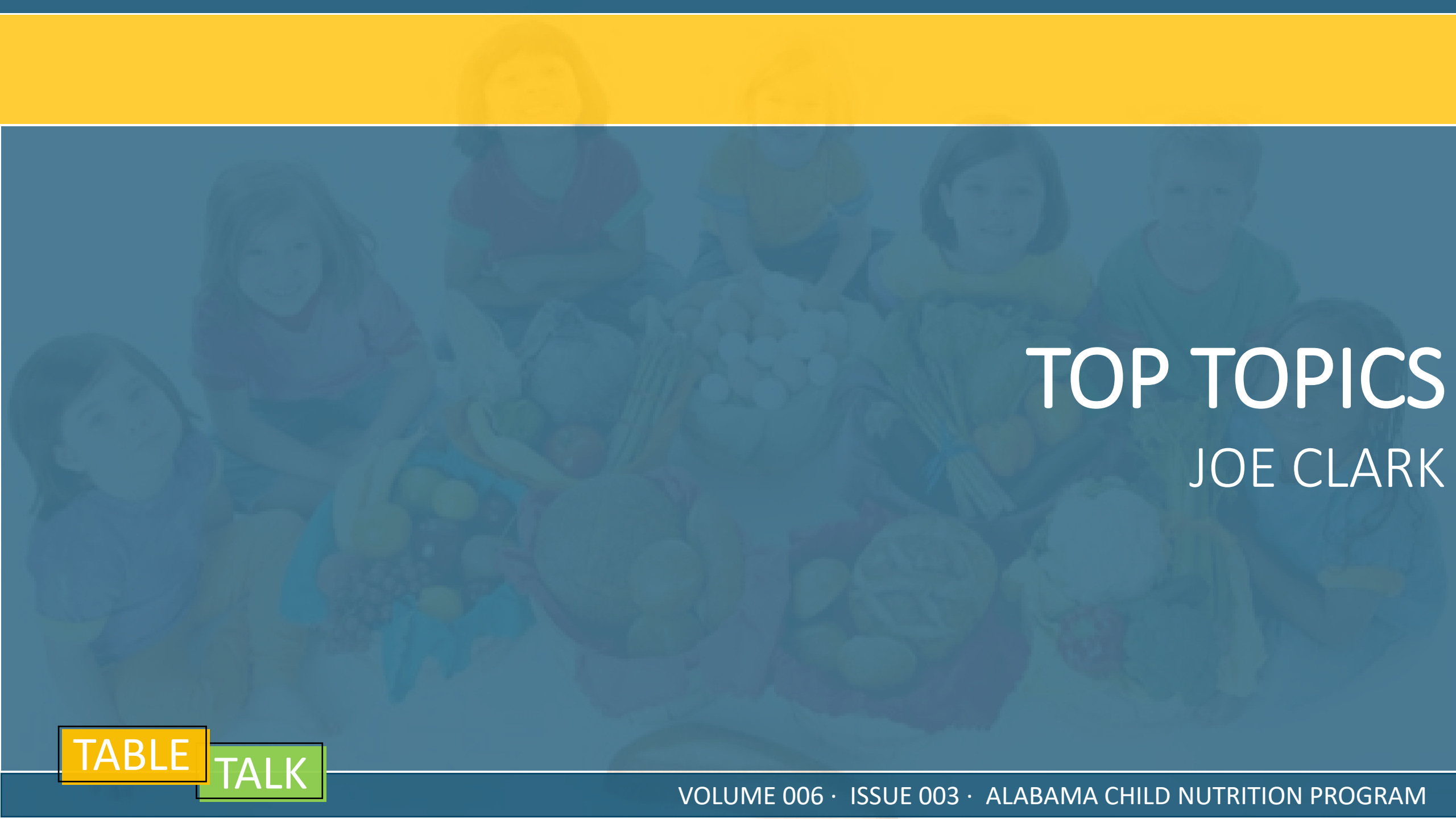
➡ To read this policy in full: [Donated and Surplus Foods Policy](#)

➡ To view all published CNP SNP Policies and Regulations: [ALSDE CNP Regulations and Policies](#)

Required Documentation:

- Date of donation
- Recipient organization
- Food items and quantities donated
- Food safety procedures followed at transfer





TOP TOPICS

JOE CLARK

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FY2025 Equipment Assistance Grant

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) previously announced it is awarding nearly \$20 million in grants to help schools invest in modern food service equipment that supports preparing and serving more local, fresh foods.

Total Amount of Alabama's Federal Award is \$389,607.00. The ALSDE Equipment Grant Application is ready and will go out very soon.

Award recipients will be announced in January 2027. To maximize the number of participants who can benefit, individual awards will be capped at \$50,000. Additional details will be shared in the grant announcement.





TOP TOPICS

RACHEL FOWLER

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FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA



September 30, 2026, FNA released [SP11-2026, CACFP 05-2026, SFSP 05-2026](#), *Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in the Child Nutrition Programs*.

This memorandum provides information on the direct final rule published by FNA on September 9, 2026, titled, Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs ([91 FR 57245](#)) **effective November 9, 2026.**

FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Benefits of Locally purchased foods:

SFAs: Safe, Abundant, Affordable

Farmers/Producers: stable market, long term revenue

Benefits local economy

Reflects community culture and supports community pride

Increases engagement and participation in CNP programs

More resilient and reliable food supply chain



FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Harvest to Hallways Initiative to provide Resources for:

- Expanding local procurement
- Granting money for school kitchens including breakfast and equipment grants
- More local food to schools
- Accelerating healthier meals “ahead of requirements”
- School meal research
- Encouraging the Pledge



FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Procurement: 4 Guiding Principals

- Buy American
- Follow Regulations (fed/state/local/tribal)
- Fair and open competition
- Responsive and responsible vendors



As of Sept. 9, 2026, the Geographic Preference option in child nutrition program regulations were amended, with changes **taking effect on Nov. 9, 2026**. The new rule does not alter policy or implementation — it simply clarifies existing requirements to make the geographic preference option easier to understand and use across USDA's child nutrition programs.

Memoranda: www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods

FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Who sells Local?

School Farms

Local producers-contracts or micro pick-up/delivery

Food Hubs/Cooperatives

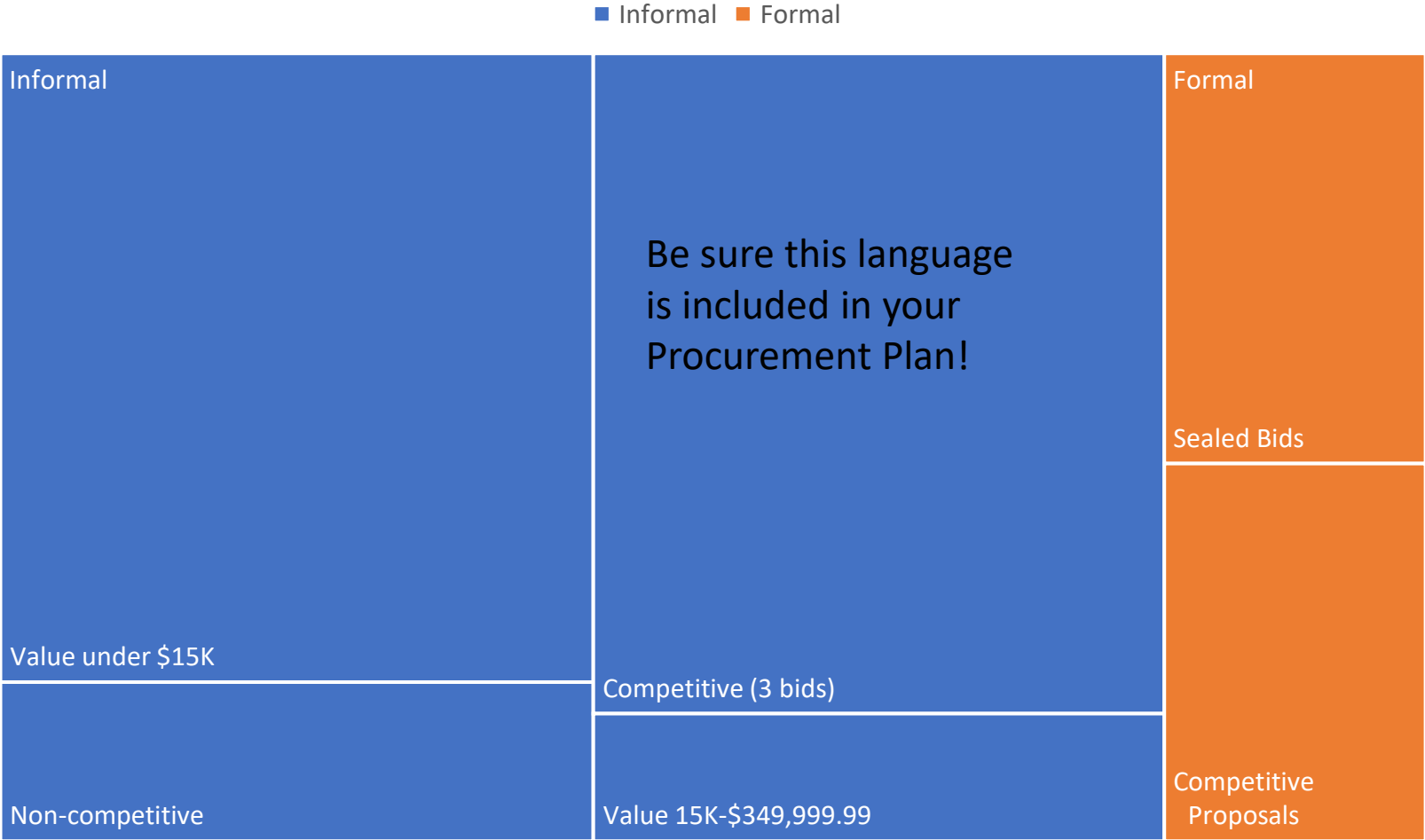
Commercial Distributors



ALL allowable!

FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Procurement Methods for **Unprocessed Agricultural Products**



FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

What processing is allowable?

Cooled/frozen

Cut, washed, bagged

Ascorbic Acid (Vitamin C) added for preservation

Dehydrating/drying

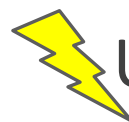
Pasteurizing milk

Butchering/making patties (unseasoned)

No heating or canning



Specify Geographic Preference

 Under Utilized

◦ Very powerful!

Old rules: you could award extra points for geographic preference with a defined scoring parameters, giving local items an **advantage**.

New rule: SFAs can write specify local products, making them a **requirement**. (can write specs either way)

These rules apply only to minimally processed agricultural products:

- can vary seasonally
- can vary by product

FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT UPDATE FROM USDA

Defined Scoring Advantage:

	PRODUCE EXPRESS	RAY'S PRODUCE	F&V DISTRIBUTION
Contract Price	\$31,000	\$35,000	\$34,000
% F&V from within the state	20	80	50
Geographic preference points to respondent able to meet > 60% local items	No	Yes (10% pref.)	No
Price with preference points applied, for evaluation purposes only	\$31,000	\$31,500	\$34,000

Ray's Produce is the only firm that is able to supply greater than 60% of the requested items from the state, thus, Ray's Produce receives a 10% reduction in price for the purposes of evaluating bids. Even with the reduction, Ray's Produce is not the lowest bidder. If price alone were the determining factor for this school district, Produce Express would be awarded the contract.

	LAURIE'S LEGUMES	PAULA'S PULSES	GARY'S GRAINS
Price = 60	40	50	60
Three references, past history = 20	20	20	20
Able to provide farm/facility tour or classroom visits = 5	0	5	5
Able to provide state of origin on all products = 5	0	5	5
Ability to provide products sourced within the state = 15	0	15	7
100 possible points	60	95	97

In the example above, Paula's Pulses is able to source 75% of their products from within the state, earning them 15 points in the scoring process in the local products category. Gary's Grains can source 55%, earning them 7 points, and Laurie's Legumes is unable to guarantee any products from within the state so they receive 0 points in the local preference category. Gary's Grains wins the contract.

Farm to School Procurement Update from USDA

Local Product Specification:



OG:

- Apples, Fresh, 125-138 count, whole and free from decay, injury or disease

Revised:

- Local apples, Fresh, 125-138 count, whole and free from decay, injury or disease
- Must be grown within 200 miles of Imaginary School District

Definition of “Local” is decided by YOU!

Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2026

Schools may offer and parents may request as a preference across all school programs:

- Flavored & unflavored whole milk
- Flavored or unflavored 2% milk
- Nutritionally equivalent plant-based milk substitutes
- Flavored & unflavored lactose-free milk (any fat content)

Physicians, Dietitians, Parents & Guardians may also request any other beverage be substituted for milk for a student with a **DISABILITY REASON THAT RESTRICTS THE DIET**.



Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2026 Quick Reference Guide



Summary of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2026

The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2026 is an amendment to the Richard B Russell National School Lunch Act that became public law on January 14, 2026.

Key Provisions

- Expanded milk options
- Schools may now offer, but are not required to offer whole milk, reduced-fat (2%) milk, low-fat, fat-free, lactose-free, and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy beverages without requiring a diet prescription.
 - Some soy milk and pea milk products meet NSLP nutrition standards for milk.
 - Nutrition facts labels should be reviewed to ensure that plant-based milk products meet the USDA nutritional standards for fluid milk substitutes (see chart below).

USDA Nutritional Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes

Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fl. Oz)
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	150 mcg
Vitamin D	2.5 mcg
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	.44 mg
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg

- **Sugar Limit:** All fluid milk (flavored or unflavored, organic or not) must contain no more than 10 grams of sugar per 8 oz serving.
- **Required Non-Flavored Option:** Schools must continue offering at least one unflavored milk option.
- **Nutrition Analysis Flexibility:** Menu planners may exclude total fat and saturated fat from cow's milk in their nutrition analysis.
- **Disability Requests:** A written statement from a physician, registered dietitian, or a parent/guardian must identify the disability that restricts the student's diet and specify the substitute for fluid milk. This substitute is not required to meet the USDA nutritional guidelines for fluid milk.
- **Non-disability Requests:** Parents/guardians may also request a fluid milk substitute not being offered by the SFA if it meets the USDA nutritional guidelines for fluid milk.

Updated September 24, 2026

WHOLE MILK GUIDANCE

MILK ONLY!

Milk Substitute Request Form

This form is for a **parent or guardian** to request a fluid milk substitute for a student due to a **disability or non-disability reason**. The completed form should be kept on file for use by the school cafeteria.

Student Name: _____

School Name: _____

Reason for Milk Substitute

Please select one of the following:

☒ Disability

If the milk substitution is required because of a disability, please provide the following information:

Disability that restricts the student's diet (required): _____

Milk substitute requested: _____

☒ Non-Disability

If the milk substitution is requested for a reason other than a disability, please select the milk requested:

☐ Lactose-Free Milk

☐ Soy Milk

☐ Pea Milk

☐ Other Nutritionally Equivalent Milk: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Diet Prescription for Meals at School

This file is to be maintained for use within the school cafeteria.

Student's Name: _____

Name of School: _____

To be completed by a Licensed Physician, Licensed Physician's Assistance, Nurse Practitioner, or Registered Dietitian for medical purposes only

Student's Diagnosis (optional): _____

Major life activity affected by the disability (required): _____

Diet Prescription- **please attach additional instructions if necessary**. Be specific with instructions. This form is used to provide guidance for cafeteria staff.

Foods to Omit (Due to Allergy or Sensitivity):

Food to Omit	Recommended Food(s) to Substitute

****If foods are listed to be omitted from the diet, specifics on foods to substitute MUST be provided.**

Other Diet Modifications (Check All that Apply):

Special Diet	Information Requested
☐ Modified Carbohydrate	Grams per meal (range)
☐ Increased Calorie	Calories per meal (range)
☐ Decreased Calorie	Calories per meal (range)
☐ Modified Texture	Textures Allowed (i.e. ground, pureed)
☐ Other (Please specify):	Instructions:
☐ Other (Please specify):	Instructions:

I certify that the above-named student needs special school meals prepared as described above because of the student's disability or chronic medical condition.

Healthcare Provider Signature & Credentials

Date

It is recommended, but not required, that the diet prescription be renewed annually.

Updated August 25, 2026

TABLE TALK

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Protecting Children with Food Allergies Act

- Applies to all staff under NSLP and SPB
- **Annual training** must cover **best practices to prevent, recognize, and respond to food-related allergic reactions**
- Includes identifying common allergens, implementing evidence-based food safety practices, and responding appropriately to reactions
- The law recognizes that **student safety extends beyond the classroom to cafeterias and any food preparation/serving environment**





Training Resources

Food Allergies in School Nutrition Programs: Food Allergies in SNPs - General Food Allergies – ICN iLearn **(1.0 hour)**

Hidden in Plain Sight: PSU: Hidden in Plain Sight (September 2024) - ICN iLearn **(1.5 hours)**

Keeping School Meals Safe for All Students: STAR: Keeping School Meals Safe for All Students: Allergy and Hygiene Awareness (August 2025) - ICN iLearn **(1.0 hour)**



TOP TOPICS

DEVIN WILLIAMSON

TABLE TALK

VOLUME 006 · ISSUE 003 · ALABAMA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

Grant Opportunity: [Chef Ann Foundation's Salad Bars to Schools](#)

[Salad Bars to Schools \(SB2S\)](#), a national grant program operated by the [Chef Ann Foundation](#), provides schools and districts with everything needed to implement salad bars effectively as a part of a reimbursable meal, while supporting a journey to more scratch cooking and values-aligned procurement. Our Salad Bars to Schools program grants K–12 schools everything needed to install a salad bar — including salad bar equipment and all accessories, marketing materials, and comprehensive online training courses through the [School Food Institute](#).

K-12 school districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program with an enrollment of at least 100 students per school site may apply no later than **March 31, 2027**.



Grant Opportunity: DEPEND (Defining Evidence for Programs to Ensure Nutrition for Development)

Through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

A cohort-based demonstration and learning model for creating healthier, more appealing school meals through sustainable strategies.

Nutritious school meals support child health and development, yet school systems face persistent operational, workforce, infrastructure, procurement, and financial constraints. This funding opportunity is designed to answer the overarching question: What procurement, infrastructure, workforce, operational, and student-centered strategies enable schools to provide healthier, appealing meals at scale within existing recurring school-meal resources?

School districts, School Food Authorities (SFAs), district/SFA-wide or multi-district consortia or individual schools will implement strategies to address school-meal challenges at a scale sufficient to generate credible evidence.

Applications are due October 13, 2026, and decisions are anticipated October 23, 2026.

Alabama's Junior Chef Competition

- Application was sent out via Constant Contact 8/26/26
- Applications due 12/4/26
- Teams are notified of selection by 12/18/26
- Competition will be held on 1/15/27 at Jefferson State Community College in Hoover, AL
- This announcement has also been shared with FCS Teachers
- SERO Competition will tentatively be held in April 29-30 in Orlando, Florida



Alabama State Junior Chef Competition

The Alabama Child Nutrition School Programs Staff is pleased to announce the tenth annual **Alabama State Junior Chef Competition!** This culinary competition aims to inspire students to develop innovative dishes for their school lunch programs. It encourages engagement with school nutrition and offers a platform for students to showcase their culinary talents. **Students in grades 8-12** will gain valuable experience in recipe development, public presentation, teamwork, and local food systems.

The Alabama Junior Chef Competition aims to inspire students statewide to participate in creating healthier school meals, thereby improving present and future health. Beyond educating students about nutrition, the competition fosters interest in incorporating Alabama-grown products into Child Nutrition Programs. Furthermore, it inspires and prepares the next generation of food-service professionals. The top 7 teams will be chosen to travel to the state competition.

December 4 th , 2026	Deadline to submit your application packet.
December 18 th , 2026	ALSDE announces the top 7 teams which will advance to the state competition.
January 15 th , 2027	Alabama Jr. Chef Competition @ Jefferson State Community College Shelby-Hoover Campus
March-May, 2027	Southeast Regional Junior Chef Competition @ Florida. Specific competition date is to be announced.



 If you have questions or have a team wishing to compete this year, please email CNPNSLP@ALSDE.EDU
A copy of the registration packet will be provided upon request.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program & Culinary Challenge

FFVP:

Continue submitting September claims via paper claims. October claims will be submitted via LINQ. Instructional video to follow.

Culinary Challenge October & November Taste Tests:

- Ranch Pasta Salad
- Breakfast Tacos
- Baked Banana Pecan Bar
- Buffalo Chicken Mac n Cheese
- Blackened Chicken Salad Wrap
- Succotash



Culinary Challenge Open House Event





TOP TOPICS

SUSANNE REEVES

TABLE TALK

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BUY AMERICAN TRACKING

<https://www.breakforaplate.com/buy-american-resources/>

- Beginning the 25-26 SY, all sponsors were required to track all non-domestic food purchases.
 - This includes items on the Statewide bid & items on the federal non-available list (ex. Pineapples, bananas)
- A tracker has been created & provided to all sponsors.
- If the 10% threshold will not be met, sponsors must request a temporary accommodation.
- This accommodation should be used while making efforts to meet the 10% requirement.
- Maintain documentation from vendors if domestic items are substituted for non-domestic items.

VERIFICATION

October 1:

SFA's who verify applications should complete sections 4 & 5 of the Verification Report in the LINQ online application

- The Verification Report is in the online application list.

October 31:

All SFAs

- RCCIs and Full District CEP SFAs

- Complete Section 1-3 of the Verification Report on the last operating day of October

- SFAS Verifying Applications

- Complete Section 1-3 & Section 4 Column B on the last operating day of October

November 15: Verification Must Be Complete

November 18: Verification Report must be completed online

Important Note!

- ALSDE reviewed the document and determined that the guidance it contains is inaccurate.
- The regulations cited in the document do not correctly interpret USDA requirements and guidance.
- There is no USDA or ALSDE regulation requiring public schools to provide meals to private schools.
- Private schools may enter into contractual agreements with public schools for meal services.
- Under such agreements, the private school pays the public school an agreed-upon price for the meals provided.
- A fixed price is based on a plate cost calculation to determine a minimum price.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Participation Rights of Nonprofit Private School Students

A Summary of Federal Regulatory Authority for LEA-Administered Meal Benefits

Statutory Authority: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq.
Regulations: 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 & 245
Administering Agency: USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

I. PURPOSE

This document summarizes the federal statutory and regulatory framework governing income-eligible students enrolled in nonprofit private schools to receive free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). It is intended to provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs), school food authorities, and partnering institutions with a clear understanding of the legal basis for extending NSLP benefits including through satellite or vended meal arrangements — to eligible students not enrolled in public schools.

II. PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENT ELIGIBILITY — STATUTORY BASIS

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act explicitly extends NSLP coverage to qualifying nonprofit private schools. Under 42 U.S.C. § 1758(b)(1), eligibility for participation is determined on the basis of household income. Federal regulations at 7 C.F.R. § 210.1(b) confirm that nonprofit private schools meeting applicable requirements are eligible sites for NSLP participation.

Income-eligible students attending nonprofit private schools therefore hold the same federal entitlement as their public school peers. The mechanism of delivery — not the entitlement — varies.

III. ROLE OF THE LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY — RESIDENCE-BASED

Federal regulations at 7 C.F.R. § 245.9 establish that when a nonprofit private school operates as a School Food Authority (SFA), responsibility for administering free and reduced-price meal eligibility determinations for its students falls to the public LEA serving the geographic area where the students reside. This is commonly referred to as the “residence LEA” rule.

Key provisions of this framework include:

- The LEA of the attendance/catchment area retains responsibility for income eligibility determinations for private school students residing within its boundaries.
- The private school itself is not required to become a separate SFA in order for its students to receive meals — the LEA serves as the administering authority.
- Students who qualify are entitled to receive meals at no cost or reduced cost, consistent with the public school meal program.

This framework is further supported by 42 U.S.C. § 1760(d), which preserves the LEA’s responsibility for meal service regardless of the type of school they attend within its service area.

IV. SATELLITE AND VENDED MEAL ARRANGEMENTS

An LEA or SFA that operates an existing NSLP-approved food service program may extend that program to a partnering nonprofit private school through a satellite or vended meal arrangement — or a private school to establish its own independent food service program. This authority is provided under 7 C.F.R. § 210.9(b), which permits SFAs to enter into agreements for the preparation and delivery of meals at recipient sites.

INACCURATE

V. RELEVANT FNS POLICY GUIDANCE

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service has issued guidance memos that clarify and reinforce this framework:

SP 40-2016 — Provides operational guidance on extending NSLP participation to private school students, including through LEA-administered arrangements where the private school does not hold independent SFA status.

SP 10-2011 — Addresses non-pricing program structures and the treatment of private school students under existing SFA agreements.

State child nutrition agencies — which administer the NSLP on behalf of USDA FNS within their respective states — may also have issued supplemental guidance implementing these federal provisions. LEAs are encouraged to consult their State agency for state-specific procedures related to private school participation.

VI. SUMMARY

Federal law and regulation are clear: income-eligible students attending nonprofit private schools are entitled to free and reduced-price meal benefits under the NSLP. The public LEA serving the geographic area where those students reside holds responsibility for administering those benefits when the private school does not independently operate as an SFA. A vended or satellite meal arrangement — authorized under 7 C.F.R. § 210.9(b) — allows an existing LEA food service operation to fulfill this obligation efficiently, without requiring the private school to build or maintain its own meal program.

This structure represents a well-established and federally sanctioned model for ensuring that all income-eligible youth — regardless of the type of school they attend — have access to the nutritional support to which they are legally entitled.

References: 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751–1769; 7 C.F.R. Parts 210, 245; USDA FNS SP 40-2016; USDA FNS SP 10-2011

TRAINING TIDBITS

SUZANNAH YODER

TRAINING TIDBITS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	AREA
 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TRAINING	AUGUST 18-19, 2026	Gordon Persons Building Auditorium	Montgomery, AL
 NEW DIRECTORS' TRAINING	AUGUST 20-21, 2026	Gordon Persons Building Auditorium & Conference Room	Montgomery, AL
 RCCI & PRIVATE SCHOOL FINANCIAL TRAINING	AUGUST 21, 2026	Gordon Persons Building Conference Room	Montgomery, AL
2026 FALL CONFERENCE	NOVEMBER 17 – 20, 2026	The Grand Hotel and Conference Center	Point Clear, AL



**THERE'S NO PLACE
LIKE SCHOOL
NUTRITION:**

*Leading with Wisdom,
Courage, and Heart*

**ALSDE CHILD NUTRITION
DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 17-20, 2026**

Register Now!

**\$55 Farm to School Tour and Dinner
\$325 Fall Conference**

Registration Deadline: October 23, 2026

Click Here



<https://asna.memberclicks.net/2026-fall-conference-alsde#/>

Farm to School Farm Tour

Follow the Yellow Brick Road and join us for this year's Farm Tour! Along our journey, we'll visit several unique farms across the land, discovering the people, places, and products which make our agricultural community so special. After a day of adventure, we'll gather for a delightful dinner before making our way back to the hotel. As a special keepsake from our trip around "Oz", each participant will receive a commemorative sweatshirt.

We can't wait to travel down the Yellow Brick Road with you!

\$55*

**In addition to your conference registration*



**Mike McKenzie,
Mckenzie Farms**



**Craig Goolsby,
Silverhills Farm**



**James Sirmon,
Sirmon Farms**



**Dinner at The
Waters Edge**

Bus Leaves Hotel at 3:00 p.m.

TRAINING TIDBITS

*Get on the bus
with us!*



There's No Place Like Local:
**Meet Alabama's
Farmers**

**Wednesday, Nov. 18
10:00 - 11:30**

*Connect with the people behind the
harvest and discover opportunities
to bring more fresh, local
products to your students.*



Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, November 17

- 3:00 - 6:00 Alabama Agriculture and Industries,
Farm to School Tour, Transportation Provided
- 6:00 - 8:00 Farm to School Dinner
Water's Edge, Fairhope, AL
- Pre-Registration Required

Thursday, November 19

- 8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast Provided
- 9:00 - 12:00 Training Sessions
- 12:00 - 1:15 Plated Luncheon
- 1:15 - 4:00 Breakout Sessions

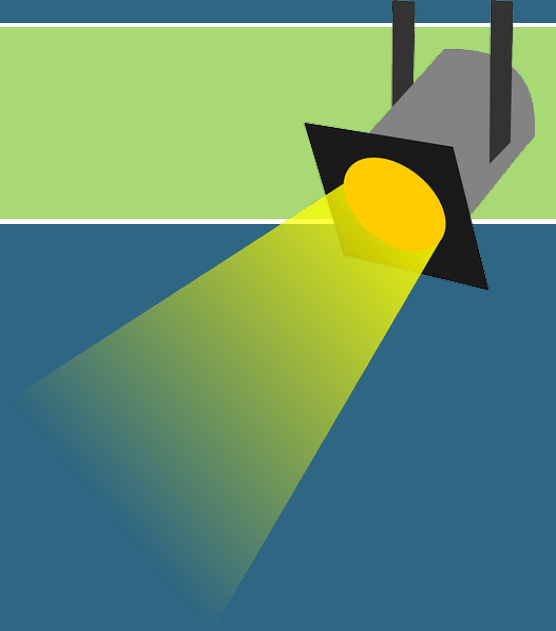
Wednesday, November 18

- 10:00 - 11:30 Farmer Meet & Greet
- 12:00 - 1:00 Conference Registration and
Welcome Luncheon
- 1:00 - 4:45 Opening Session and Keynote
Speaker

Friday, November 20

- 8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast Provided
- 9:00 - 10:15 Area Meetings
- 10:15 - 12:00 Training Sessions
- 12:00 - 12:15 Evaluation, Q&A, Dismissal





SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

BETH SPRATT

TABLE TALK

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Anderson Farms

Farmer: Kelvin Anderson

📍 Houston County



Anderson Farms

Farmer: Kelvin Anderson



Produce:
Watermelons
Cantaloupe
Butternut Squash
Yellow Squash
Tomatoes
Green Tomatoes
Okra
Cabbage
Collard Greens
Sweet Potatoes
Sweet Corn
Peas
Bell Peppers
Hot Peppers



ADAI Dress Like a Farmer Day



ADAI NSLW Challenge



**NATIONAL
SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
CHALLENGE**

Enter in the Fun By Doing One:

- 1. SHARE YOUR TRAY**
Take a photo of a school lunch tray and share it with us!
- 2. SHOW FARM CONNECTION**
Highlight an AL-grown food on the menu and share a fun fact about where it comes from!
- 3. SHOW YOUR SPIRIT**
Decorate or celebrate your cafeteria for National School Lunch Week!

**ALABAMA
FARM
TO SCHOOL**

The poster is framed by red and yellow striped curtains. At the top, a sign with a red border and yellow dots reads 'NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK CHALLENGE'. Below this, a blue banner says 'Enter in the Fun By Doing One:'. To the right of the banner is a cartoon rabbit dressed as a circus ringmaster, wearing a red jacket, blue pants, and a black top hat with 'F2S' on it. Below the banner are three numbered challenges in yellow boxes. At the bottom right is a yellow starburst logo for 'ALABAMA FARM TO SCHOOL'.



334.694.4657

CNPNSLP@alsde.edu



Thank you for attending!
Be sure to document your attendance
by completing the survey.
Scan the QR code

