



TABLE

TALK



Alabama State Department of Education
Child Nutrition Programs

VOLUME 005
ISSUE 007
APRIL 29, 2026

Webex Recording

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

OVERVIEW

- Director's Breakfast and Lunch Costs
- Area Meetings
- Health Inspections
- Buy American Accommodation
- PLE Exemption
- CEP Data in AIM

Reviews and Reminders

Monthly Memos

- ALSDE
- USDA

- Common Compliance Concern: Triennial Assessments
- School Breakfast Grant, Third Allocation
- LINQ Application SY26-27
- FFVP Applications
- Scratch Cooking Workshop
- Summer Culinary Trainings
- New Culinary Cohort
- Southeast Regional Junior Chef
- Farm to School
- SNA Congressional Hearing

Top Topics

Training Tidbits

- Area Meetings
- New Managers
- Administrative Review
- New Directors
- Fall Conference

- Instead of a Sponsor, we've selected a well-deserving state staff member!

Sponsor Spotlight



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

SUZANNAH YODER

TABLE TALK

VOLUME 005 · ISSUE 007 · ALABAMA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

Go eat lunch!

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

ACTION BY: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs

FNS INSTRUCTION 782-5

SOURCE CITATION: Section 210.6 and 220.6

Pricing of Adult Meals in the National School Lunch
And School Breakfast Programs

Meals served to adults who are directly involved in the operation and administration of the school nutrition programs may, at the discretion of the school food authority, be furnished at no charge. As such, their cost may be fully attributed to and supported by the nonprofit food service operation.



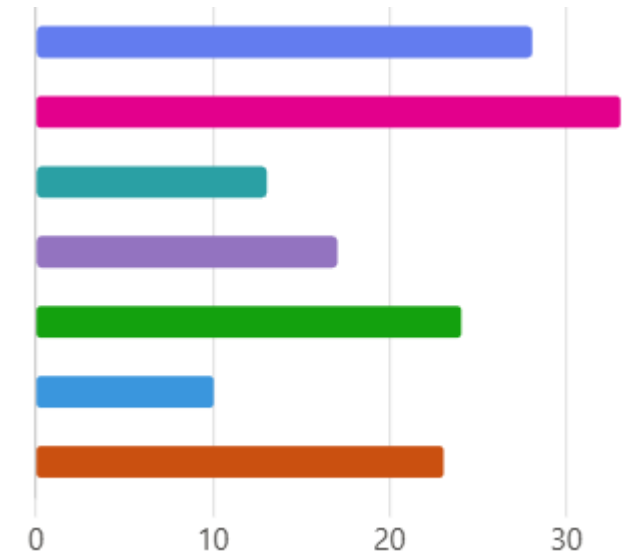
Area Meetings

Time	Topic
8:30-9:00	Arrival, Registration, Tech Connections, and Welcome
9:00-10:00	Common Compliance Concerns from 2025-2026
10:00-10:45	Navigating What's Next: Dietary Guidelines for Americans and USDA Priorities
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-12:00	School Year 2026-2027 LINQ Annual Agreement Tips and Q&A
12:00-1:00	Lunch (optional working lunch to continue work on annual agreement)
1:00-2:15	General Program Guidance & Spring Conference Follow-Up
2:15-2:30	Closing Remarks and Evaluations

**We have 149 participants
registered to attend!**

**REGISTER HERE: Area Meetings &
Annual Agreement Trainings**

- Area 1, May 20th, ALSDE Birmingham Office
- Area 2, May 21st, ALSDE Birmingham Office
- Area 3, May 22nd, ALSDE Birmingham Office
- Area 4, May 12th, ALSDE Montgomery Office
- Area 5, May 13th, ALSDE Montgomery Office
- Area 6, May 15th, Coastal AL Community College, Brewton Campus
- Area 7, May 14th, Enterprise City Schools, Instructional Services Center



REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

SUSANNE REEVES

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

Deadline is
6/30/26

Time to submit SY 2025-2026 Health Inspection information!

- Information emailed to all sponsors 3/25/26
- All sponsors must have at least two inspections per year. If you do not have at least two, you need to show documentation that health inspections were requested to your local health department

Applications Claims Compliance Reports Security Search	
Applications >	
Item	Description
Sponsor Manager	SNP Sponsor's Profile, Site and Hold Inform
Potential Sponsor	Potential Sponsor
Sponsor Application	Access to all program applications
Application Manager Dashboard	Application Management Tool
Application Packet	Applications Forms (Sponsor and Site)
Meal Pattern Compliance Summary	Number of Menu Pattern Certifications b
Verification Report	Mandatory Annual Verification Report
Verification Summary	Mandatory Annual Verification Report (F
Second Review of Applications	FNS-874 report for Sponsors selected to
Food Safety Inspections	Number of Food Safety Inspections by S
Food Safety Inspections Summary	Number of Food Safety Inspections by S

Applications > Food Safety Inspections >

Food Safety Insp

132-0000 Status: Active
Enterprise City Board of Education
DBA:
220 Hutchinson Street
Enterprise, AL 36330-1934
County: Coffee
FEIN: 63-6000875

Action	School Year
Modify	2025 - 2026

Instructions

Food Safety Inspections for School Year (SY) 2025 - 2026

Indicate the number of Food Safety Inspections conducted at each listed site between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026. If you did not select "Two" or "Three or more" in Item 1a, you MUST also indicate WHY you did not meet the regulation by selecting one of the options in Item 1b. If you select "Other", enter the reason in the space provided.

Site ID	Site Name and Address	1. Safety Inspections performed in 2025 - 2026. For each site indicating either "Zero" or "One", select the reason in 1b.	
		1a. Food Safety Inspections	1b. Reason for fewer than two inspections conducted (Select the most predominant reason).
1320045	Brookwood Elementary School 6500 Boll Weevil Circle Enterprise AL, 36330-9238	Two	
1320030	Coppinville Junior High School 4641 Boll Weevil Circle Enterprise AL, 36330-0000	One	Scheduling - Inspector Not Available
1320040	Dauphin Junior High School 1271 Dauphin Street Extension Enterprise AL, 36330-1269	None	Other
1320050	Enterprise High School		

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Buy American

Temporary Accommodation

- 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
- Fields are fillable
- Link to this document is in Break for a Plate under Buy American resources. We'll re-email as well.

The image shows two overlapping forms titled "SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2025-2026". The forms are for requesting a temporary accommodation from the 10% threshold requirement. The top form is partially obscured by the bottom one. Both forms include a section for selecting food categories that require an accommodation, with checkboxes for Fruit, Vegetables, and Fruit/Vegetable Juices. The bottom form also includes a section for describing the anticipated timeline to meet the Buy American requirements.

SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2025-2026

Please select all categories of food that require an accommodation from the threshold requirement (i.e. exceeding 10 percent):

- ☐ Fruit
- ☐ Vegetables
- ☐ Fruit/Vegetable Juices
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2025-2026

Please select all categories of food that require an accommodation from the threshold requirement (i.e. exceeding 10 percent):

- ☐ Fruit
- ☐ Vegetables
- ☐ Fruit/Vegetable Juices
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

Please briefly describe the anticipated timeline to make modifications to meet the Buy American requirements (this could include timing of calculating the baseline percentage of non-domestic food purchases (or include the baseline percentage if available), obtaining documentation, and balancing the accommodation and exception process with making menu changes).

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

PLE EXEMPTIONS DUE 6/30/26

For SY 2026-2027, SFAs with a positive or zero balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2025, are exempt from PLE pricing requirements.

For SFAs that do not qualify for this exemption, more information will be forthcoming when the updated PLE Tool is received by USDA

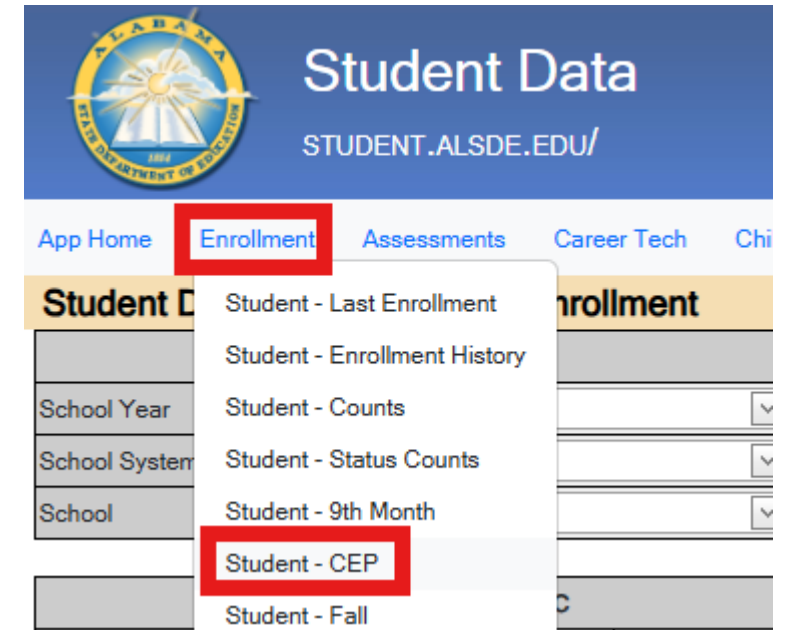
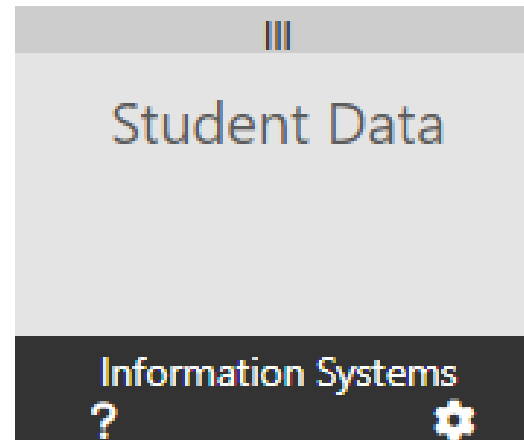


[PLE Exemption Form SY2026-2027 and Attestation of Positive Operating Balance 6/30/2025](#)

Email sent on Thursday, April 16, 2026

REVIEWS AND REMINDERS

DC information in AIM



VERY IMPORTANT – Review this information monthly to ensure students have the correct lunch status before the April 1st data pull



MONTHLY MEMOS

CHAD LANGSTON

TABLE TALK

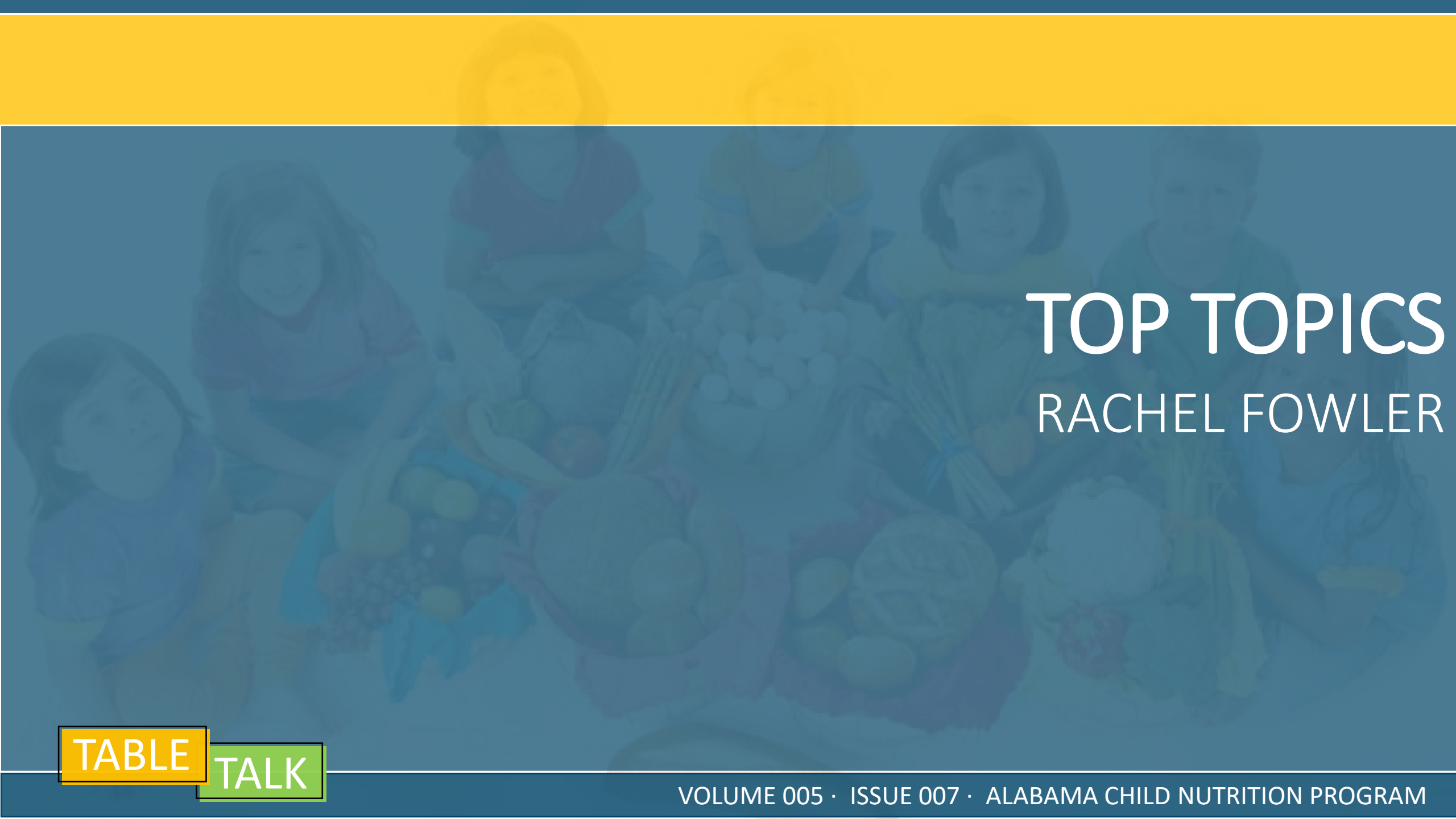
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MONTHLY MEMOS

- Upcoming 2025-2026 SFA Survey Participation - 3/26/26
 - USDA-FNS-SFASurvey@gmailserver.com
- SNA Micro-Volunteering Opportunity: Review ANC26 Scholarship Applications – 3/27/26
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant Application for SY 2026-2027 – 4/1/26
- Hotel Information: Alabama Farm to School and Scratch Cooking Workshop – 4/2/26
- Your Opinion Matters! ALSDE Recipe Development Survey – 4/8/26
- Join Us for ALSDE's Summer Culinary Trainings! – 4/9/26
- Announcement: 2026 Spring Area Meetings & Annual Agreement Trainings – 4/13/26

MONTHLY MEMOS

- Alabama Farm to School and Scratch Cooking Workshop – Important Details for May 7–8 – 4/14/26
- ALSDE Culinary Challenge Application Now Open! – 4/14/26
- SY 2026-2027 Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Eligibility Notification – 4/15/26
- SP 06-2026 and Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Exemption Form SY 2026-2027 – 4/16/26
- New Culinary Intensive Opportunity for School Districts – 4/16/26
- Reminder: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant Application for SY 2026-2027 – 4/28/26
- Reminder: ALSDE Culinary Challenge Application Now Open! – 4/28/26
- Reminder: Join Us for ALSDE's Summer Culinary Trainings! – 4/29/26



TOP TOPICS

RACHEL FOWLER

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COMMON COMPLIANCE CONCERNS

Triennial Assessments

7 CFR 210.31(e)(2)



Wellness Policy Requirements

Triennial Assessments should be completed by the end of every third program year (June 30th).

An SFA must provide:

1. A copy of the current local school wellness policy
2. Documentation demonstrating the local school wellness policy has been made available to the public
3. Documentation of efforts to review and update the local school wellness policy, including an indication of who is involved in the update and of methods the SFA uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate
4. **A copy of the most recent triennial assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy**

The Triennial Assessment must include the following **THREE pieces of information:**

- The extent to which the local school wellness policy compares to a **model** Local School Wellness Policy (ex: [WellSAT](#))
- The progress the **district** has made toward attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy
- The extent to which **schools** are in compliance with the local school wellness policy

[ALSDS sample Triennial Assessment which includes all three required areas of assessment.](#)

School Breakfast Grant

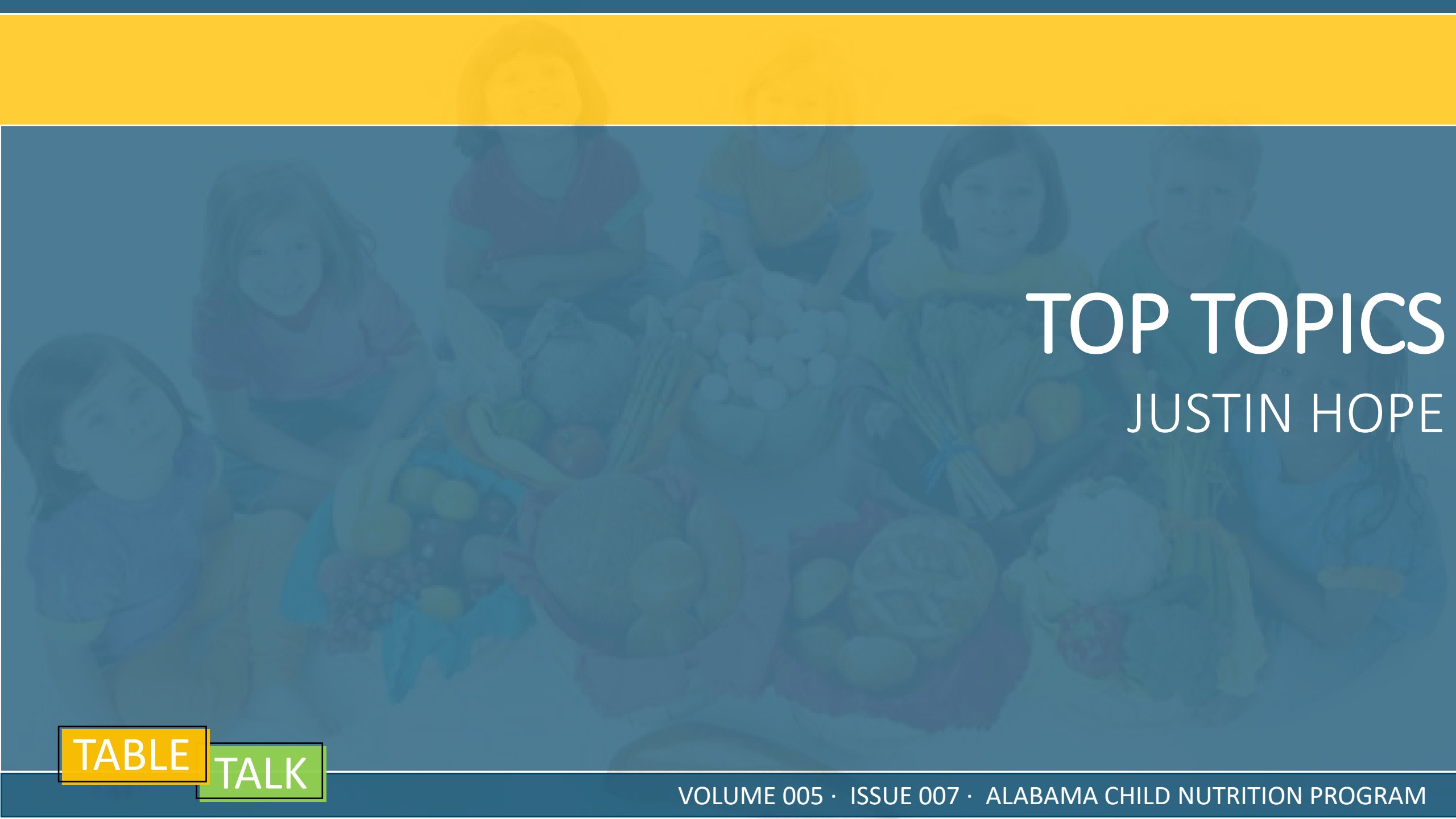


Congratulations to the SFAs awarded funding through the third allocation of the Alabama School Breakfast Grant.

In the 3rd Allocation:

- 14 SFAs received a combined total of over \$2.3 million
- 3 SFAs will start Universal Free Breakfast as of May 1, 2026
- 2 additional SFAs will provide Universal Free Breakfast for SY26-27

Thank you for your efforts to continue to strengthen access to school breakfast and support student success across Alabama!



TOP TOPICS

JUSTIN HOPE

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SY26-27 Annual Agreement

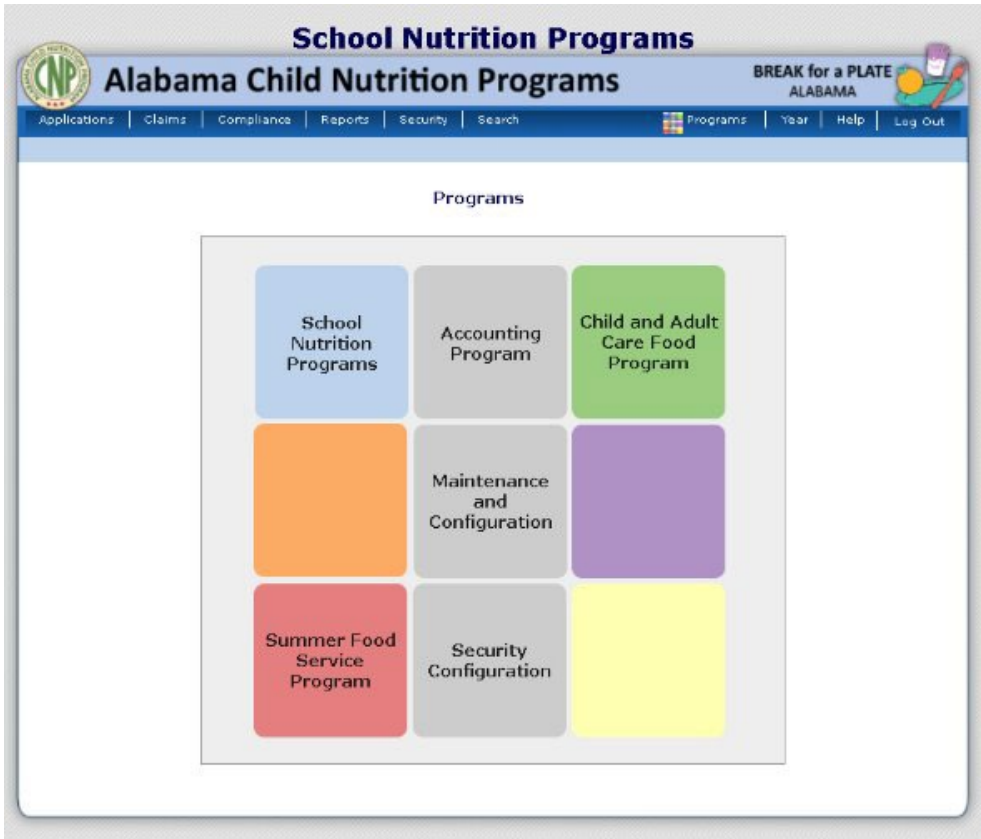
Applications will be open May 1-June 5

A detailed instructional video will be released April 30th, covering the following topics:

- Overview of the LINQ Annual Agreement process
- Timeline and key deadlines for completing the Annual Agreement
- Information and documents to gather in advance
- Checklist summary and required attachments
- New requirements for SY26-27
- Submission process and next steps

Suggested Best Practice:

- Watch the webinar and work to complete as much of the application as you can on your own.
- Make notes of any areas that are confusing or places where errors are occurring.
- Use the area meeting time to clear up questions and errors.
- **GOAL:** Submit your application at the conclusion of the meeting.





TOP TOPICS

DEVIN WILLIAMSON

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FFVP Applications

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) applications for SY 26-27 **are now open in LINQ!**

This grant is for elementary school students to receive a fresh fruit or vegetable snack during the school day twice per week.

All applications must be submitted on or before **May 15, 2026**.

Information about how to apply can be found via Constant Contact email April 1st & 28th, 2026.

The flyer is titled "Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Application for School Year 2026-2027". It features three logos at the top: the Alabama Department of Education logo, the "BREAK for a PLATE SCHOOLS" logo with a smiling apple, and the "ALABAMA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM (CNP)" logo. The text below the logos states: "The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Application for School Year 2026-2027 is now open! If you are considering this program, watch this 12-minute instructional video for more details. Feel free to pass this video along to principals, CNP managers, or others that may like to learn more about the program!". There are two purple buttons: "FFVP Informational Video" and "How to Apply for the FFVP in LINQ Video". Below the buttons, the text reads: "This year's FFVP application will be submitted via LINQ. If schools within your district are interested in applying, one application along with an attached Certification of Support, will need to be submitted for each school site. Before submitting your application(s) for the upcoming school year, review all information in this email including the videos. **All applications must be submitted via LINQ on or before May 15, 2026, no later than 11:59 p.m.**". At the bottom, a paragraph states: "Although applications will be scored based upon need (free and reduced percentage rates), a low free and reduced percentage rate does not necessarily prevent participation in the grant. If enough funding is available, all eligible applicants that submit an application will be able to participate in the grant program. However, please note that failure to properly implement the program may prevent consideration for future years." data-bbox="564 175 928 910"/>

**Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Application
for School Year 2026-2027**

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Application for School Year 2026-2027 is now open! If you are considering this program, watch this 12-minute instructional video for more details. Feel free to pass this video along to principals, CNP managers, or others that may like to learn more about the program!

[FFVP Informational Video](#)

[How to Apply for the FFVP in LINQ Video](#)

This year's FFVP application will be submitted via LINQ. If schools within your district are interested in applying, one application along with an attached Certification of Support, will need to be submitted for each school site. Before submitting your application(s) for the upcoming school year, review all information in this email including the videos. **All applications must be submitted via LINQ on or before May 15, 2026, no later than 11:59 p.m.**

Although applications will be scored based upon need (free and reduced percentage rates), a low free and reduced percentage rate does not necessarily prevent participation in the grant. If enough funding is available, all eligible applicants that submit an application will be able to participate in the grant program. However, please note that failure to properly implement the program may prevent consideration for future years.

Alabama Farm to School & Scratch Cooking Workshop

**May 7-8, 2026 Jones Valley
Teaching Farm**

Hosted by the ALSDE

Sessions Include:

- Hands-on culinary session for biscuits and chicken pot pie taught by Chef Jason Haywood
- Utilizing herbs in school meals by Jones Valley
- Field Trip to Boozer Farms
- Goal Setting

This workshop is FULL!

2026 Alabama Farm to School & Scratch Cooking Workshop

WORKSHOP AGENDA

THURSDAY | MAY 7, 2026

7:45 – 8:00 AM

Check-In

8:00 – 8:30 AM

Welcome & Agenda Overview

Jones Valley Teaching Farm

SESSION 1

8:30 – 11:30 AM

Culinary Workshop & Herb Sessions

FIELD TRIP – ROUND 1

Boozer Farms

8:30 – 8:45 AM | Load Bus

8:45 – 9:45 AM | Travel

9:45 – 11:00 AM | Farm Tour

11:00 – 12:00 PM | Travel Back

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Lunch

SESSION 2

1:00 – 4:00 PM

Culinary Workshop & Hands-on Sessions

FIELD TRIP – ROUND 2

Boozer Farms

12:30 – 12:45 PM | Load Bus

12:45 – 1:45 PM | Travel

1:45 – 3:00 PM | Farm Tour

3:00 – 4:00 PM | Travel Back

4:00 – 4:30 PM

Session Debrief & Reflections

FRIDAY | MAY 8, 2026

7:45 – 8:00 AM

Check-In / Load Bus

SESSION 3

8:00 – 11:00 AM

Culinary Workshop & Final Sessions

FIELD TRIP – ROUND 3

Boozer Farms

7:30 – 7:45 AM | Load Bus

7:45 – 8:45 AM | Travel

8:45 – 10:00 AM | Farm Tour

10:00 – 11:00 AM | Travel Back

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Goal Setting Session

& Workshop Wrap-Up

Thank you for participating in the
Alabama Farm to School &
Scratch Cooking Workshop.



Summer Culinary Trainings

Summer Culinary Trainings Hosted by the ALSDE, taught by the Chef Ann Foundation

One-Day Hands-on Culinary Trainings from 8:30-3:00

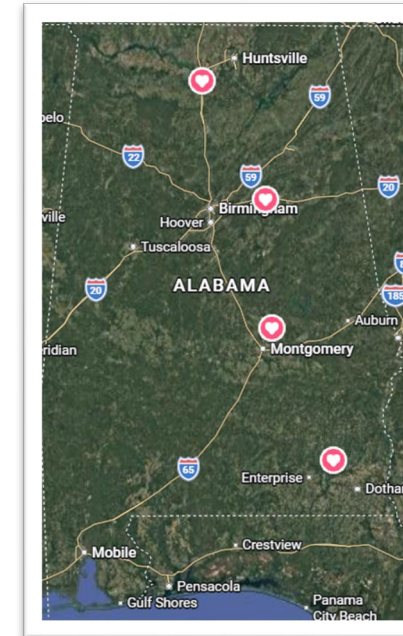
Menu:

- Conecuh Sausage Breakfast Burrito
- Banana Nut Oatmeal Bars
- Homemade Granola for Yogurt Parfaits
- Hashbrown Casserole with Drop Biscuits
- Beef Nachos with Homemade Cheese Sauce
- BLT Pasta Salad
- Potato Salad
- Buffalo Mac-n-Cheese
- Blackened Chicken Sandwich

Sign up on this [Google Spreadsheet](#). By registering, schools are attesting they will incorporate two recipes from the training into their menu in SY 26-27.

Dates & Locations:

- June 9-12, 2026: Carroll High School Ozark
- June 16-18, 2026: Priceville High School Decatur
- June 23-26, 2026: Stanhope Elmore High School Wetumpka
- July 21-24, 2026: Iola Roberts Elementary Pell City



For more information, see Constant Contact emails 4/9 & 4/29.

ALSDE Culinary Challenge New Cohort Application

Cohort 3 Overview (2026-2027)

- Initial scratch cooking mini-assessment + tailored district goals (via Chef Ann Foundation)
- Monthly student recipe testing (Sept–May), designed for Alabama students
- Open to past participants
- 8 districts selected (prioritizing district-wide participation)
- Includes summer culinary trainings
- Subgrant funding **likely available**
- Must implement 3 recipes in SY 2027–28



Why apply?

- Get expert support from the Chef Ann Foundation to expand scratch cooking
- Receive priority access to summer trainings and special workshops
- Engage students through hands-on taste testing
- Help shape and test recipes made for Alabama schools

The application is open through May 8th. See emails from 4/14 and 4/28.

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL JUNIOR CHEF COMPETITION

**3rd Place: Kate Duncan Smith DAR High School
Marshall County Schools
Street Corn Chicken and Rice Bowl**



Rooted in Ozark: How OCS partners with local farmers to feed students

Courtesy of Ozark City Schools
Though school lunches are often associated with speed and pre-packaged convenience, Ozark City Schools is elevating its menu by prioritizing fresh ingredients and scratch-made recipes.

Coinciding with National Nutrition Month in March, the district's Child Nutrition Program (CNP) is reducing its reliance on processed items in favor of whole-food alternatives. This initiative, led by CNP Director Derek Jones, follows what he calls a "scratch cooking continuum." Many school cafeterias across the country rely heavily on "Ready-to-Eat" or "Heat-and-Serve" items that contain lengthy ingredient lists, but Jones is focused on simplification.

"If we go to the scratch end, we can serve the same meal but with maybe six ingredients—and a kindergarten can pronounce them all," Jones explains. He notes that while some states are beginning to legislate against ultra-processed foods in schools, Ozark is aiming to get ahead of the curve. "If we can give our kids the best nutrition possible, we can

also stave off health issues later in their lives." **Local Partnerships**
A driver of this program is a local partnership with Riley Creek Farms, a hydroponic farm located 10 miles east of Ozark on Alabama Highway 27. For Karissa Dusinger, child nutrition program manager at Mixon Intermediate School, the connection is personal.

"Riley Creek Farms means more than lettuce to me. This is grown right down the road from my home by people whom I have known for more than 30 years," Dusinger said.

The hydroponically grown produce arrives at schools with the roots attached, remaining "living" until prepared. Dusinger noted that the freshness reduces prep time and significantly cuts down on food waste.

Student Impact
Success in the cafeteria comes down to one thing: the students. At Mixon, Dusinger introduces two new recipes a month and lets the kids play the role of food critics with a "thumbs up or thumbs down" vote at the register.

"My only rule is that if you don't try it, you don't



Students at Mixon Intermediate School (left) enjoy the healthy school lunch supplemented with lettuce from Riley Creek Farms (right). Photos courtesy of Ozark City Schools.



get to vote," Dusinger said. "When they feel that they have a 'say' in the menu, they become much more open to giving new things a chance."

So far, the kids are buying in. Recent hits include "Pasta Alla Mixon," a pink sauce penne, and a homemade tomato soup favorite.

Economic Impact
The initiative also functions as an economic driver for all of Dale County. Because Ozark City Schools operates under the Community Eligibility Provision, all students eat for free through federal funding.

By sourcing ingredients locally, those federal dollars remain in the com-

munity. Additionally, the Alabama Department of Agriculture compensates the district 20 cents per plate for every Alabama-grown item served.

Staff Pride
A \$7,000 grant from the Chef Ann Foundation helped jumpstart the transition, funding new equipment like immersion blenders and scales. For the kitchen staff, the move toward scratch cooking is a point of professional pride.

"My team takes so much pride in the work that they do," Dusinger said. "They always tell me that they'll do anything for our kids. Serving food that we feel good about makes the effort worthwhile."

Looking Forward
Mixon is just the starting point. The district plans to scale these scratch-cooking practices across every campus in the coming years. By expanding local partnerships and putting more Alabama-grown produce



Ozark City Schools

Lettuce: Riley Creek Farms
Strawberries: Birdsong Berries



Monroe County Schools JF Shields K4 Students



TOP TOPICS

JULIE AUTREY

TABLE TALK

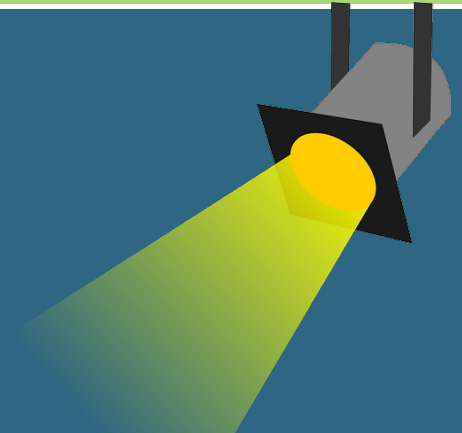
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SNA Congressional Hearing

SNA advocacy focused on the growing need for increased funding to support scratch cooking, fresh foods, and full implementation of the new DGAs. Speakers, including current SNA President, **Stephanie Dillard**, highlighted the challenges of rising costs, both in food and labor, and emphasized that current reimbursements are insufficient to meet these new nutrition goals.

The briefing provided feedback and context ahead of USDA's upcoming rulemaking to update school nutrition standards based on the 2025–2030 DGAs. It laid the groundwork for federal action—supporting SNA's calls for enhanced reimbursement rates, program modernization, and expanded capacity for fresh and scratch cooking in school meals.



A graphic of a spotlight fixture in the top right corner, casting a beam of light towards the center of the slide.

ALSDE STAFF SPOTLIGHT

JULIE AUTREY

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Lakesha Welch

Administrative Support Assistant

We are so excited to celebrate **Lakesha Welch** as she moves on to a well-deserved promotion! During her time with our team, she served as our ASA and, most importantly, as the welcoming first impression for anyone calling our department in need of support. Her kindness, professionalism, and calm presence set the tone for our work every day.

She will be incredibly difficult to replace and will be deeply missed! Above all else, her kindness stands out as her greatest strength, and it has made a lasting impact on our team and those we serve. We are grateful for her contributions and wish her every success in this next chapter.



TRAINING TIDBITS

SUZANNAH YODER

TRAINING TIDBITS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	AREA
AREA MEETINGS	MAY 12-22, 2026	Birmingham, Montgomery, Brewton, and Enterprise	Statewide
NEW MANAGERS' TRAINING	JULY 7 – 8, 2026	Shelby County Instructional Services Center	Alabaster, Alabama
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TRAINING	AUGUST 18-19, 2026	Gordon Persons Building Auditorium	Montgomery, AL
NEW DIRECTORS' TRAINING	AUGUST 20-21	Gordon Persons Building Auditorium & Conference Room	Montgomery, AL
2026 FALL CONFERENCE	NOVEMBER 17 – 20, 2026	The Grand Hotel and Conference Center	Point Clear, AL



334.694.4657

CNPNSLP@alsde.edu



Thank you for attending!

Be sure to document your attendance
by completing the survey.

Scan the QR code

<https://forms.office.com/r/ft2C14iK8k?origin=IprLink>

