**CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM**

**STATE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 5 YEAR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW CYCLE**

Maine Department of Education

Child Nutrition

Walter Beesley Director Child Nutrition

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Northeast Region NERO

1. Maine is requesting a waiver for the 3 year Administrative review cycle. The Maine State Agency struggles with keeping to the NSLP administrative review schedule and doing a good job. Maine has had to cut back on local trainings due to the increased work load of administrative reviews and procurement reviews. Maine has switched to a 6-year procurement review schedule to help which has been successful. Maine had a policy to review the High Schools in all programs over and above the school selection requirement. Maine has not revised the policy to meet the 7 CFR 210 requirements only. Staff are salaried and are working beyond their 40 hour work week with no extra money or time off. The Maine school’s also struggle with our appearance every three years and any documentation required could go well into the second year. So the cycle becomes first year reviewed, and maybe closed in the first year, but general second year. This is becoming a burnout for staff. The schools have one year off and the cycle begins again and affecting their performance and yearly evaluations. It is also effecting our customer relations because we are now regulatory on every visit.
2. The granting of the waiver would do several things. First staff could have some of the stress lifted off them. Training at local and regional workshops could resume. By lifting the stress local schools may not feel that pressure placed on them by the review and reviewer. The trainings should reduce findings and errors on reviews because additional trainings could be offered to address the common findings.
3. Maine is looking to 7CFR 210.18 3 year requirement to be flexible to allow a 5 year cycle. Maine would be all districts on a 5 year cycle (we have no large districts by USDA definition). We would do revisits based on our policy and procedures which is attached. Maine has also purchased online software “Dynamic Internet Solutions” to work with administrative reviews and reporting to USDA
4. With the increased span between reviews it will be important that the high-risk districts are monitored and technical assistance provided more frequently.
5. There will be no cost increase. Resources are in place and ready to go. It could actually be a cost savings because at the current rate we will need contractors to help. Last year we hired a contractor just to help with the filing using reallocation money.
6. Maine would plan to start this SY 2020. The 2020 school year schedule is planned in early June and superintendents notified in July early August. Delaying this further would put Maine further behind. I believe our recent Management Evaluation FY2018 shows that the 3 year cycle has affected our operations. Time is not being spent in areas where monitoring is needed.
7. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver IS LISTED O OUR WEB PAGE AND SHARED on our weekly list serve (attached)
8. Signature and title of requesting official: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title: Director Child Nutrition

Requesting official’s email address for transmission of response: walter.beesley@maine.gov

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:

*FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience and work with the State*.

Date request was received at Regional Office:

 Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA

• Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: