



SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY

Thank you for all that you do for the children of Maine.



Child Nutrition Thursday Update

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Shout Out!!

Child Nutrition Website - <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition>

Child Nutrition List Serve Email - child.nutrition@maillist.informe.org

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

david.hartley@maine.gov

Reminder! All documents, the Student Master List and the Direct Certification (DC) List, **MUST** be submitted in Excel.

The Student Master List needs to be **ALL** enrolled students, what school they attend, if families are living together and if not on the DC list, addresses are needed.

If you have questions, please call or email David at 624-6878 or david.hartley@maine.gov.



Hiring a New School Nutrition Director?

sarah.d.platt@maine.gov

Make sure the hiring standards are met!

Requirements for hiring new School Nutrition Directors with a student enrollment of 2,499 or less:

- Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas; OR
 - Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas, and at least one year of relevant school nutrition experience; OR
 - High school diploma (or GED) and three years of relevant experience in school nutrition.
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- Also, new school nutrition directors must have at least 8 hours of food safety training not more than 5 years prior to their starting date or completed within 30 calendar days of their start date.

*LEA's with less than 500 students, may request a waiver from the State Agency Director if they have a candidate that meets educational standards but has less than three years of experience.



USDA Foods

terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov

USDA Summer Food Service Program

If you are purchasing summer USDA items. The ordering is done differently than the NSLP ordering, it starts on the 'Allocation' tab. There are directions, "How to Place Your Summer Order" on our [website](#).

DOD/FFAVORS

If you are participating in SY25 DOD/FFAVORS, please make sure that you are approving past due receipts until June 30, the end of School Year 2025.





This is for your knowledge and awareness

Below are an article and info sheet that will be released thru a DOE Newsroom this week, and a direct email will be sent to Superintendents and Principals next week. Notifications will be going home to automatically enrolled students starting May 5th. To avoid duplicate applications, families should be instructed to wait until June 15th to apply if they have not received notification of qualifying for the benefit. Please let us know if **you** have questions, **all** other questions should be directed to the Office of Family Independence at DHHS. The number is on the flyer.



Learn How SUN Bucks Can Help Feed Kids Over the Summer!



SUN Bucks is a grocery benefit program to help families buy food during the summer when schools are closed. Each eligible school-age child receives a one-time payment of **\$120**. Children who get these benefits can also participate in other summer meal programs.

How does SUN Bucks work?

SUN Bucks benefits are loaded onto an **EBT card** and can be used to buy food like fruits, vegetables, meat, whole grains, and dairy at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other places that accept EBT benefits.

How do I get SUN Bucks?

Automatic Enrollment

Your child will be **automatically enrolled** for SUN Bucks and does not need to apply if:

- They completed an application for school meal benefit and were found eligible or
- Age 6-16 and part of a household that already participates in SNAP, FDIPIR, TANF, MaineCare at 185% FPL or identified as foster, homeless, or migrant by OFI or OCFS.

Keep an eye out! Automatically enrolled households will receive benefits starting in June on an existing Pine Tree card or on a new EBT card in the mail.

Manual Application

Most families will be automatically enrolled. If you haven't received a letter in the mail by June, consider applying for SUN Bucks before August 15 if:

- Your child attends a school that offers the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, *and*
- Your household meets the requirements for free or reduced-price school meal benefit.

Do you have a new address?

Make sure your address is up to date with your school and with the Office for Family Independence so your **SUN Bucks** benefits are sent to the right place!

Update your information by calling OFI at (855) 797-4357



Don't wait to use your benefits!

SUN Bucks expire after 122 days.

For more information: [Maine.gov/dhhs/ofi](https://maine.gov/dhhs/ofi)

To apply: Go to MyMaineConnection.gov or fill out a paper application at Maine.gov

Questions? Call OFI at (855) 797-4357 option 5



[Maine.gov/dhhs/ofi](https://maine.gov/dhhs/ofi)



SUN BUCKS IS BACK THIS SUMMER

SUN Bucks returns this summer! Summer is a time when many children lose the free and reduced-price meals they get at school, and SUN Bucks is designed to supplement families' grocery budgets over the summer. SUN Bucks provides families with \$120 EBT benefit for each eligible school-aged child to buy groceries when school is out. Most eligible children will receive these benefits automatically, but some families will need to apply. This program is in addition to free meals that children of all ages can access at [summer meal sites](#) in their communities.

How SUN Bucks Works

Families will receive a one-time EBT benefit of \$120 per eligible child for the summer. Benefits can be used at authorized retailers, like grocery stores and farmers markets, to purchase healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, meats and other protein sources, whole grains, and dairy.

- For children who are already eligible to receive SNAP, SUN Bucks will be loaded onto the household's existing EBT Card (also called Pine Tree Card).
- For children who don't receive SNAP but did receive P-EBT or SUN Bucks previously, the benefit will be loaded onto the previously issued card.
- For children who don't receive SNAP and didn't receive SUN Bucks or P-EBT previously, a new Pine Tree card will be issued.

If a family had an EBT card previously and lost it, a replacement card must be ordered by calling (800)-477-7428.

Automatic Enrollment for most families

Most children will be **automatically enrolled** for SUN Bucks and do not need to apply if:

- They completed an application for school meal benefit and were found eligible or
- Aged 6-16 and part of a household that already participates in SNAP, FDPIR, TANF, MaineCare at 185% FPL or are identified as foster, homeless, or migrant by the Office for Family Independence (OFI) or Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS).

Automatically enrolled households will receive a letter in late spring and benefits will start in June.

Manual Application for some families

Families who haven't received a letter in the mail by mid-June notifying them of automatic enrollment should consider applying manually for SUN Bucks if—

- Their child attends a school that offers the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program and
- The household meets the requirements for free or reduced-price school meal benefit.

To learn more about eligibility and how to apply on the [Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\) SUN Bucks webpage](#).

Guidance for Special Provision Schools

- Community Eligibility Provision
 - If students are not part of a household that already participates in SNAP, FDPIR, TANF, MaineCare at 185% FPL or identified as foster, homeless, or migrant by OFI or OCFS, but they **do** meet the requirements for free or reduced-price meal benefit, **they will need to apply for SUN Bucks**.
- Provision 2
 - If students are not part of a household that already participates in SNAP, FDPIR, TANF, MaineCare at 185% FPL or identified as foster, homeless, or migrant by OFI or OCFS, but they **do** meet the requirements for free or reduced-price meal benefit, most will need to apply for SUN Bucks.

Help to Spread the Word

Schools can help spread the word by sharing with families about the SUN Bucks program and how to receive benefits for their children.

- Encourage families with children who will automatically be enrolled to make sure their mailing address is up to date by calling OFI at (855)-797-4357.
- Tell families to keep an eye out for a letter notifying them of automatic enrollment, a new card in the mail, or a balance increase on their existing card in early June.
- Encourage families who haven't received notice of automatic enrollment by mid-June but may have eligible children to apply.

Please use the attached flyer(s) to help spread the word about this important program and direct families to [OFI's SUN Bucks page](#) for more information about the program and how to apply. Families can also call OFI at (855) 797-4357 and select option 5 to speak with an Eligibility Specialist about SUN Bucks.

Thank you for helping to raise awareness about this program and ensure children get the nutrition they need to thrive this summer.



Child Nutrition Virtual Training

**AI of any kind will be removed
from the training.**

The links to register are in the training titles.
(unless otherwise noted)

**We are unable to hold virtual and in person
training simultaneously.**

All of our webinars are recorded and put on our
website within a week of the training.

**Please mark your calendars once
you have registered.**



Annual Financial Report

May 22, 2025

1:30pm

This webinar will include updates on the Annual Financial Report that must be completed by September 1, 2025. Please send any questions you have regarding the Annual Financial Report to jodi.truman@maine.gov by May 15th. All questions submitted will be addressed in the webinar.



Local Foods Training at **Sacopee Valley Middle School**

May 2, 2025
1:00pm - 3:45pm

Sacopee Valley Middle School
137 S. Hiram Road, Hiram

Join Regional Local Food Program Coordinators, Ali Mediate and Catherine Brown, for an engaging, fun, hands-on Local Foods Training, designed to help school nutrition teams improve local food procurement, learn quick and efficient food preparation techniques, and explore simple, delicious scratch recipes using Maine's seasonal ingredients.

This interactive session will provide school nutrition staff with practical, time-saving kitchen strategies and proven methods for incorporating local foods into school meals. Participants will leave with new skills, resources, and recipes to bring back to their schools.

Training Goals:

- ✓ Understand local food procurement methods and sourcing strategies
- ✓ Learn easy, school-friendly recipes featuring seasonal produce
- ✓ Develop skills in food processing, knife techniques, and efficient storage

Local Foods Training with **Maine Coast Fishermen's Association**

Child Nutrition Culinary Classroom

Wednesday, May 7th

10:00am-2:00pm

Join Maine DOE Child Nutrition, Maine Coast Fishermen's Association, and Gulf of Maine Research Institute for a hands-on culinary training! This training will highlight Maine caught fish; expect to learn different ways to prepare fish, safe handling, as well as methods to engage students with local seafood.





Shout Out!!

RSU 25 recently hosted their annual Grandparents Breakfast at Miles Lane School.



Shelley Bowden, thank you for sharing!