

Child Nutrition Thursday Update

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

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

Community Eligibility Provision

Don't miss this opportunity to participate in CEP to the MAX!

With cuts potentially coming to SNAP and Medicare, your DC list will most likely not be as robust as it was on April 1, 2025.

Be sure to take the time to double-check your matches before submitting. Have you checked for:

- Addresses (different names, same household)
- Nonmatching names (Mohammed, Mohammad, Muhammad)
- Missing suffix (Jr/Sr) or hyphens Jones-Smith
- Birthdates that are transposed (05/12/2019 or 05/21/2019)
- Requested and received your Head Start and Homeless lists from those program liaisons

Every single addition to the list will make a big difference and meeting that 50% threshold has multiple benefits.

Let's round the difference between paid and free meals to \$4.00

Out of 175 days the student eats at school 160 day

160 days x \$4/day is \$640 that we could be reimbursed with federal funds if the student is matched on the DC list. Think of what a difference you could make by finding matches for 5 students, and then your colleagues in 20 other districts did the same? \$64,000/year and..this data is good for 4 years and there are 214 sponsors in the state...

Let's help our schools, our communities and help secure Healthy School Meals for All!

Reminders:

- The deadline to submit documentation is **June 30, 2025**
- Master Complete Enrollment List & DC list **must be submitted in EXCEL**
- Documents must be **uploaded into CNP Web**
- David Hartley **must** be notified once documents have been uploaded.
- Superintendents' signature is now needed only at the end of the process

Any questions, contact David at david.hartley@maine.gov or 624-6878

USDA Memos

USDA Policy Memo: Supporting Local Food in School Meals

The USDA has reaffirmed its commitment to local food procurement in Child Nutrition Programs with the release of memo SP 11-2025, CACFP 09-2025, SFSP 05-2025. Schools and program sponsors are reminded they can use federal funds to purchase locally grown or raised foods to serve in meal programs like NSLP, CACFP, and SFSP. This includes using geographic preference, small purchases, USDA Foods, and the DoD Fresh Program to support local economies and healthier meals for kids. Explore procurement strategies, allowable methods, and technical assistance tools at [USDA Farm to School](#).

USDA Policy Memo: Appropriations Act 2025 – Key Child Nutrition Program Updates

The USDA has issued memo SP 13-2025, CACFP 10-2025, SFSP 06-2025 summarizing provisions from the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, affecting child nutrition programs:

- Vegetable Flexibility at Breakfast: Schools may continue substituting any vegetable for fruit in breakfast menus without subgroup requirements for the rest of SY 2024–2025. Standard vegetable subgroup rules return in SY 2025–2026.
 - Ban on Chinese Poultry/Seafood: Program funds may not be used to buy raw or processed chicken or seafood from China through September 30, 2025.
 - PLE Exemptions: Only SFAs with negative food service balances as of June 30, 2024, must meet Paid Lunch Equity requirements in SY 2025–2026.
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USDA Policy Memo: New Guidance on Paid Lunch Equity for SY 2025-2026

USDA has released memo SP 12-2025 outlining Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) requirements for School Year 2025–2026. Under the 2025 Appropriations Act, only School Food Authorities (SFAs) with a negative food service account balance as of June 30, 2024, must follow PLE pricing rules. SFAs with zero or positive balances are exempt but must document their status. All SFAs must continue reporting lunch prices. Full details and tools will follow in a separate communication.

The full USDA Policy Memo which can be viewed on our website: [Policy Memos](#)



SUN Bucks letters for families that are automatically enrolled will be going out next week. Please be sure to share this with school staff, as questions may be coming in. Thank you!

SUN Bucks provide a \$120 EBT benefit for each child who qualifies to spend on groceries while school is out. Most eligible kids will be automatically enrolled in the program and don't have to apply. Families should keep an eye out for a letter in the mail with notice of automatic enrollment.

If families have questions, please ask them to visit
Maine's [SUN Bucks page](#)



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

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



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.**

Webinars

Child Nutrition Updates, Changes for SY26 & Buy American

May 20, 2025

1:30pm

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.

End of Year Updates & Reminders

June 10, 2025

1:30pm

Maine School Association Conference Registration

Now OPEN!

August 12 & 13, 2025

Double Tree in South Portland

[Register for the conference here](#)

Discounted rooms can be [booked here](#)

Keynote speaker, Kim Hodous! She will inspire, revive and remind us why we do what we do.

[Check out this short video](#) to see her in action.

New this year- Field Trips on August 12!

3 options at no additional cost. Field trips are limited to 20 people each. If you sign up and change your mind, please contact a MSNA Board Member. A bus will leave the conference location at 9:30 after the Keynote session and will return at 12 for lunch.

The choices are:

1. Oakhurst Dairy- learn about the process of how your milk is made and the journey it takes to come to your school!
2. Fork Food Lab- Maine Marinara is one of many local food producers that calls Fork Food Lab home. Take a tour of the facility and learn more about the process!
3. Maine Fish Exchange- Learn more about projects such as Mainers Feeding Mainers and see the process of fish coming off the boat and heading out to market.

The full agenda is still being worked on. The food show will be on Tuesday.

Contact Allison Leavitt with questions, aleavitt@lisbonschoolsme.org

Shout Outs!!

To celebrate the end of standardized testing, the RSU 68 kitchen did a superhero themed lunch.

"Be the hero of your own story".



Heather Whitten, thank you for sharing!!

New England Dairy School Nutrition Experts Form

Many thanks to Nic LaBreck, Child Nutrition Supervisor, ME DOE Child Nutrition; Mikael Andersson, School Nutrition Director, Five Towns CSD; and Erica Mullaly, School Nutrition Director, RSU 5 for representing Maine at the New England Dairy School Nutrition Experts Forum last week. School nutrition directors from around New England discussed school milk-related topics in the morning and toured Bartow's Longview Farm in Hadley, MA in the afternoon.

It poured rain, but it didn't dampen the enthusiasm for all things school milk. And yes, those are cow-spotted ponchos everyone was wearing!



Katie Hoffman, thank you for sharing!