

Federal Funds and Your School Nutrition Program



Child Nutrition
Maine Department of Education

Agenda

- ▶ Supply Chain Assistance Funds
- ▶ Pandemic EBT Local Administrative Funds
- ▶ Equipment Assistance Grants
- ▶ USDA Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative
- ▶ Coming down the pipeline...
- ▶ Questions?

Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Funds





SCA Funds - Basics

- ▶ Funds to alleviate Supply Chain Disruptions in the School Meal Programs
- ▶ Must have opted in to accept funds and have a signed attestation with DOE
 - ▶ If you received the first round, another attestation is not needed
- ▶ First round distributed last year
- ▶ Second round is coming soon
- ▶ Third round will be coming out later this year
- ▶ Funds are for domestic food that is unprocessed or minimally processed

How Much Are We Getting?

- ▶ **For those that opt in and have an attestation:**
 - ▶ **Round 1** (already distributed): a minimum of \$5,000 per district with additional funds prorated depending on enrollment size
 - ▶ **Round 2** (estimated to go out around Thanksgiving): a minimum of \$5,000 per district with additional funds prorated depending on enrollment size
 - ▶ opt in process already completed for round 2
 - ▶ **Round 3** (estimated to go out in early 2023): a minimum of \$5,000 per district with additional funds prorated depending on enrollment size
 - ▶ Round 3 funds will be lower than previous distributions as the total amount is less
 - ▶ Round 3 opt in will be required and information will be released on the process in an upcoming Thursday Update
 - ▶ If you have already completed an attestation for round 1 or 2, this will count towards round 3

SCA Funds - Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **What are examples of unprocessed and minimally processed food products?**
 - ▶ Fluid Milk, cheese, and yogurt
 - ▶ Fruits and vegetables
 - ▶ 100% juice allowable but must be domestic
 - ▶ Grain products such as pastas and rice
 - ▶ Meats (whole, pieces or food items such as ground meats)
 - ▶ Meat alternatives such as beans or legumes
- ▶ **Does minimally processed include cut or pureed items? What about fresh, frozen, canned, or dried? Yes and yes. For instance, canned beans are allowable. As are frozen broccoli or cut melon.**

SCA Funds - Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **What is unallowable?** Foods that are significantly processed or prepared.
 - ▶ For instance, pizza; baked goods like bread, crackers or muffins; pre-packaged sandwiches or meals; or pre-cooked items like chicken nuggets.
- ▶ **Are flavored milks and yogurts eligible?** Yes
 - ▶ Cheese sticks? Yes
 - ▶ Hardboiled eggs? Yes; Pre-cooked egg patties? No
 - ▶ Applesauce cups? Yes
 - ▶ Chickpeas? Yes; Pre-prepared hummus? No

SCA Funds - Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **What programs can the items be used in?** School Breakfast Program (SBP) or National School Lunch Program (NSLP) including NSLP Afterschool Snack or NSLP Seamless Summer Option.
- ▶ **Can SCA funds be used for FFVP?** No
- ▶ **Do products have to be Buy American compliant?** Yes, there are no exceptions. Products must be domestic.
- ▶ **May SCA funds be used for labor, supplies or admin expenses?**
No
- ▶ **Are shipping and handling or packaging costs that are part of typical charges by a vendor for minimally processed food products allowable?** Yes, if they are for the purchase of non-processed or minimally processed domestic items using SCA funds.

SCA Funds - Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **Do I have to track my spending of SCA funds? Yes!**
 - ▶ **What counts as documentation?**
 - ▶ Invoices or receipts that highlight products purchased. A document that tracks total spent.
- ▶ **Am I eligible if my net cash resources exceed a three-month operating balance? Yes**
- ▶ **Will the DOE monitor use and tracking of the funds? Yes**
- ▶ **Where can I find more information on SCA funds?**
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/scafunding>

Our Role at the DOE

Distribute the funds to SFAs who opt into the funding

Train on the use of the funds

Monitor the use of the funds

- Regular requests for SCA fund reporting will be included in Thursday updates
- DOE staff will follow-up and request the amount spent, the document used to track funds, and a variety of invoices and receipts
- This will be part of an Administrative Review or
- A separate request for documentation if not on the current review cycle

Spend Your Money!

- ▶ In total, there will be 3 rounds of funding. At a minimum, this is an additional \$15,000 to purchase domestic unprocessed or minimally processed items for your SBP or NSLP.
 - ▶ There is flexibility with balance too high due to supply chain issues and increased operating costs
 - ▶ Funds should be used as soon as able
 - ▶ Distributed funds will not be returned to the state but **MUST** be used for approved purchases
- ▶ When in doubt, consider items used daily
 - ▶ Milk, including flavored milk
- ▶ Increase local purchasing and highlight area farms
 - ▶ 4th of July BBQ in December! Purchase local beef, prepare variety of vegetable-based sides.
 - ▶ Spring Harvest Showcase during an End of Year Celebration
 - ▶ Rhubarb
 - ▶ Asparagus
 - ▶ Fresh lettuce
 - ▶ Radishes

SY 2022 Pandemic EBT

Local Level Administrative Grants

P-EBT - Local Level Funds

- ▶ Local Level P-EBT Funds are distributed to SFAs to cover their administrative costs of handling P-EBT.
 - ▶ This includes time spent processing meal benefit applications for P-EBT, fielding calls/questions about P-EBT, and reporting attendance data to DOE.
- ▶ SY 2022 P-EBT Local Level Admin Grants have not been distributed yet but will be this school year. These can be used to cover **SY 2022 P-EBT Admin costs**.
- ▶ Each school who usually operates NSLP in your SAU will receive \$628 in funds.
 - ▶ If your schools has over 1,000 students, the amount is \$3,135.

Equipment Assistance Grants

SY 2023

Equipment Assistance Grants

- ▶ Additional \$50 million nationwide (already received \$30 million - total \$80 million)
 - ▶ Maine: Additional \$129,672 (already received \$60,310 - **total \$189,982**)
- ▶ Funds awarded to SFAs who participate in NSLP
 - ▶ 29 schools awarded school year 2023
- ▶ Can use funds for equipment that supports the following:
 - ▶ Serving healthier meals, including those sources from local foods;
 - ▶ Implementing scratch cooking;
 - ▶ Establishing or expanding school breakfast;
 - ▶ Storing fresh food;
 - ▶ Improving food safety

Equipment Grants - SY 2023 Awarded Requests

- ▶ Convection Oven
- ▶ Walk in Unit
- ▶ Steamer
- ▶ Dishwasher
- ▶ Double Oven
- ▶ Range/Oven
- ▶ Steam Table
- ▶ Microwave
- ▶ Refrigerator
- ▶ Reach in Freezer
- ▶ Salad bar
- ▶ Slicer
- ▶ Disposal
- ▶ Food Processor
- ▶ Serving Counter
- ▶ Open Air Cooler
- ▶ Milk Cooler

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USDA Healthy School Meals Initiative

Healthy School Meals Initiative

- ▶ Phase 1: Request for Applications for an organization to manage sub-grants
- ▶ Selected organization will:
 - ▶ Manage grants to small and/or rural school meal programs
 - ▶ Establish an awards program to recognize school districts that are excelling in meal quality
 - ▶ Support schools in bringing best practices into their lunchroom

Healthy School Meals Initiative Small and Rural School Grants



When? Spring/Summer 2023



How much? Up to \$150,000 per school district



Why? Help overcome challenges including:

- Rising costs of food
- Staffing shortages
- Lack of space
- Outdated kitchen equipment



Intended to help small and/rural SFAs overcome these challenges, while improving nutritional quality of school meals and meet Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award criteria

Healthy School Meals Initiative

Nutritional Quality Awards

- ▶ Starting School Year 2024
- ▶ Will recognize schools that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of meals
 - ▶ Exceeding nutrition requirements for sodium and whole grains
 - ▶ Reducing added sugars in school breakfasts
 - ▶ Implementing innovative practices in scratch cooking and nutrition education
 - ▶ Providing meals that reflect the cultures of their students



Healthy School Meals Initiative School Food Systems Transformation Challenge Grants

- ▶ When? Spring 2023
- ▶ What? Partnerships to create a resilient, equitable, and nutritious school food systems
- ▶ How? Grants
 - ▶ Grantees will work with industry partners to develop creative solutions to provide nutritious foods to schools
 - ▶ Agricultural producers, growers, processors, etc.



Coming Down the Pipeline

Farm to School State Agency Grant

- ▶ Each State Agency had an opportunity to receive a USDA farm to school grant
- ▶ Maine Department of Education Child Nutrition Program will use the funds to:
 - ▶ Expand and support existing projects (Harvest of the Month, Local Foods Trainings, and the Farm to School Cook-Off)
 - ▶ Create several contracted positions (Culinary Coordinators and a Coordinator Manager) to implement farm and sea to school programs across the state. This includes hiring regional culinary coordinators in each superintendent region of Maine to expand and promote this work to increase the impact.

If you know anyone who may be interested, contact stephanie.stambach@maine.gov

SY 2023 Pandemic EBT

- ▶ P-EBT: Eligible school children receive temporary emergency nutrition benefits on EBT cards that are used to purchase local food
- ▶ Free/Reduced eligible children who were unable to access meals if their school was closed or operating with reduced hours or attendance for at least 5 consecutive days
- ▶ Plan will be like SY 2022 P-EBT
- ▶ Biggest change: Extends benefits to children who enrolled in non-NSLP participating virtual schools or began homeschooling due to COVID concerns
- ▶ DHHS is working on a plan with support from DOE

Streamlining Program Requirements and Improving Integrity in the SFSP

- ▶ Regulatory changes for the SFSP
- ▶ Effective October 1, 2022 - will affect SFSP 2023 operations
- ▶ Changes will be included in the 2023 SFSP trainings
- ▶ Comparison table
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/streaming-requirements-comparison-chart>



What
questions do
you have?

now on to our
commercial message

Change in Communication Tool

- ▶ Thursday Update will now be more like a newsletter
- ▶ The majority of our communication will be within the newsletter each Thursday
- ▶ It will live on our website @
- ▶ <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/Thursday%20Update>
- ▶ Use it to reference information important to you!
- ▶ The listserve will be for time sensitive information that you need & for your communications between districts