Ohio | Department of Education

John R. Kasich, Governor
Stan W. Heffner, Superintendent of Public Instruction

M E M O

To: School Meal Program Directors

From: Brigette Hires, Assistant Director, School Meal Programs

Date: January 2012

Re: School Meal Programs Important Dates, Deadlines, and Memoranda

Happy New Year! Please take time to note the following important information regarding the operation and reimbursement process of your school district United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Meal Programs.

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AND UPDATES

Child Nutrition Reauthorization Policy Memo Updates
USDA recently published the following policy memos for School Food Authorities (SFAs) related to the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act:

- SP 6-2012, SUBJECT: Applications and Other Household Materials for Limited English Proficient Households (published 12/6/2011)
- SP 2-2012, SUBJECT: Verification and Reporting of Foster Children (published 10/24/2011).

Note that USDA has updated policy memo SP 28-2011 Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Water Availability During National School Lunch Program Meal Service. Questions and Answers have been added to this policy memo. This policy memo and all other USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) reauthorization policy memos may be found at:
www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/CNR_2010.htm.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization Section 112: School Breakfast Program (SBP) Outreach – Reminder and Availability of Sample Flyers
Per USDA Memo SP 40-2011 *Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Outreach to Households on the Availability of the School Breakfast Program* (published June 15, 2011), schools participating in the SBP must inform families of the availability of breakfasts. A written notification of the availability of breakfast was to be relayed just prior to or at the beginning of the school year in the informational packets that are sent to each household with free and reduced price meal applications for the new school year. If a school has not yet sent a written notification of breakfast availability to households of students attending the school, the school must do so immediately.

Sample flyers to fulfill this written notification requirement may be found on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) School Breakfast Program website at www.ode.state.oh.us, search *School Breakfast*.

In addition, schools should send reminders regarding the availability of the SBP multiple times throughout the school year. Schools can provide reminders to children through their public address systems in schools or through means normally used to communicate with the households of enrolled children. Other acceptable outreach activities may include developing or disseminating printed or electronic material to families. For example, information about the SBP should be posted on the school's website.

The Ohio Department of Education, Office for Child Nutrition (OCN) encourages SFAs to use the information in *Expanding Your School Breakfast Program*, the SBP Toolkit found at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Breakfast/expansion/default.htm as a resource for outreach and expansion activities. Please contact your School Meal Programs Regional Consultant if you have any other questions regarding school breakfast.

Eligibility Manual for School Meals – Update Released October 2011

In October 2011, USDA updated the Eligibility Manual for School Meals guidance document. ODE, OCN has two versions available on the website: a version depicting all changes in yellow highlighting and a version with no highlighting. Both versions may be found by going to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us search *eligibility manual.* ODE recently conducted a webinar that discussed the changes to the guidance document. A recording of the webinar is available on the same website page provided above.

Direct Certification

On April 27, 2011, USDA published policy memo 31-2011: *Frequency of Direct Certification Matching Activities Beginning in School Year 2011-2012*. Per the policy memo, USDA now requires all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) utilizing free and reduced price applications for meal eligibility determinations to complete the Direct Certification process three times a school year. LEA's are suggested to complete the process at the beginning of the school year, approximately three months after the beginning of the school year (November-December timeframe) and then three months after the second process (February-March timeframe). LEAs may conduct the Direct Certification more frequently if desired. The state SNAP match list is updated in CRRS on a monthly basis (around the middle of any given month).

Upon completion of additional Direct Certification match processes, if a LEA identifies a student(s) on the Direct Certification match list who are already free eligible based on submission of a paper application, the LEA is to code the student(s) as Directly Certified but is not required to send a letter to the household informing them of the change. The LEA must notify the household if a student(s) changes from reduced price eligibility or paid meal eligibility due to the Direct Certification match process.

Due to year-long eligibility, any student(s) who were Directly Certified through the first match process but no longer appear on subsequent Direct Certification results lists are to maintain their free meal eligibility status.

For complete instructions on completing the Direct Certification process, go to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us and search *Direct Certification*. LEAs with questions about the new Direct Certification match process can contact their Regional School Meal Programs Consultant at 800-808-6325.

GRANT AND SPECIAL PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

Farm to School

ODE, OCN is offering SFAs a second chance to apply for a Farm-To-School program grant. Approximately 10 grants of $2,000 will be awarded to schools for use in developing and implementing a Farm-To-School project in school year 2011-2012. Priorities of awards will be given to schools with at least 50% of students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals (based on October 2011), but schools with lower percentages will be considered. ***Only one site award per sponsor will be given.*** The Farm-To-School projects must include the students in the project(s). Participation of school staff, families, and community members is encouraged.

Projects must be **new** initiatives. If a school garden project is implemented, produce raised in the gardens may be used to supplement food provided to sponsor's schools. Grantees will be allowed to use the grant funds for the duration of the project period, not to exceed September 30, 2012.

A copy of the application can be found on the ODE website, search *Farm to School*. Deadline for application receipt is Friday, March 2, 2012. ODE, OCN is hosting a Farm-To-School webinar on Monday, January 30, 2012 from 1:00PM – 2:30PM. Participants of the webinar will hear an overview of Farm to School programming and receive details to apply for the Farm-To-School grant. For information on how to register for the webinar, go to the ODE website and search *Meal Programs Trainings and Webinars.*

Fresh Fruit And Vegetable Program (FFVP) – *Application Deadline is March 23, 2012*

The FFVP application is now open to schools who wish to apply and be considered for program participation in school year 2012-2013. The FFVP is intended for schools with a high level of free and reduced price eligible students to encourage the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Schools selected for the FFVP will be funded for a period of the first day of the school year in 2012 through June 30th 2013.

Expectation for Program Participation:

- Selected schools must be elementary schools that operate the National School Lunch Program.
- Priority will be given to the schools with the highest level of poverty amongst the schools that complete an application (selected schools must have at least 50% of their students eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits).
- The selected schools will offer fresh fruits and vegetables free of charge to all enrolled students, and must publicize the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables to the students.
- Selected schools will agree to offer fresh fruits and vegetables a minimum of 2 times per week, outside of the school meals program.
- Participating schools must submit a monthly claim for reimbursement.
- Participating schools will budget their program money so funds are available throughout the school year and are fully spent by June 30th, 2013.

For more information and the application, go to ODE website www.ode.state.oh.us, search *fruit and vegetable.*

UPCOMING TRAINING AND WEBINARS

ODE, OCN is hosting several webinars in the next few months covering topics including The New Meal Patterns (date is tentative pending the on-time release of the meal patterns in January 2012), Local Wellness Policies, Indirect Cost Guidance, School Breakfast Program Outreach, Contracting with Food Service Management Companies, Civil Rights and Procuring a Vendor. For dates, times and registration information, please go to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us and search *Meal Programs Trainings and Webinars*. Be sure to view this site often throughout the school year as additional topics will be added.

SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

USDA Civil Rights Statement

Please note the USDA nondiscrimination statement must appear on all school meal programs communication that an SFA makes available to the public. This includes the student meal application and letters to the parents, any student menus that are made available to the public, and any SFA websites of which school meal program information is available. For websites, it is not required that the nondiscrimination statement be included on every page of the program information Web site. At the minimum, the nondiscrimination statement, or a link to it, must be included on the home page of the program information.

Please note that the nondiscrimination statement has recently changed. SFAs must update all of their materials accordingly. The nondiscrimination statement is as follows:

"In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer".

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material will at a minimum include the statement, in print size no smaller than the text:

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

A nondiscrimination statement is not required to be printed on items such as cups, buttons, magnets, and pens that identify the program, when the size or configuration makes it impractical. Contact your School Meal Programs Regional Consultant if you have additional questions.

All SFA employees are to have civil rights training on an annual basis. ODE, OCN has published a PowerPoint presentation for SFAs to use in training employees on Civil Rights. This presentation is available on the ODE website; search *civil rights* (select ODE-Nondiscrimination and Civil Rights). SFAs must maintain a record of attendance for all Civil Rights trainings conducted. ODE, OCN is offering monthly webinars to help fulfill this requirement. For a list of dates and times go to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us and search *civil rights*.

National School Breakfast Week: *March 5-9, 2012*
The theme of the week: “"School Breakfast – Go for the Gold" will highlight how eating a healthy balanced breakfast at school helps students shine. The campaign will help students learn about the importance of eating healthy and being active. “School Breakfast - Go for Gold” also aligns with USDA’s HealthierUS School Challenge and the First Lady's Let's Move Goals.

The campaign runs from January to March 2012, culminating in National School Breakfast Week, March 5-9, 2012.

For additional information go to: www.schoolnutrition.org/Level2_NSBW2012.aspx?id=15458

ODE, OCN School Meal Programs Newsletters Are Now Online
ODE, OCN is now posting the School Meal Programs newsletters online! For a copy of this newsletter and previously published newsletters, go to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us and search *Meal Newsletter.*

Navigating the ODE Website
Tend to get lost navigating the ODE website? School meal program information may be found by following the below instructions:
1. Go to the ODE website at www.ode.state.oh.us
2. You can try searching by a keyword such as verification by typing the word verification into the search box that is found in the upper right hand corner of the ODE website and click search.
3. If this does not yield results you are looking for, go back to the ODE main webpage
4. Hover over the title Learning Supports located along the top of the webpage. Hovering over this term will bring up another menu of option. From this menu pick Food and Nutrition.
5. On the left side of the screen, pick School Meal Programs

Health Inspection
Many thanks to all Ohio SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program! Ohio had 100% compliance of LEAs reporting health inspection data for School Year 2010-2011 for the USDA National Report.

Please note: If one or more sites under an LEA received zero or one inspection in 2010-2011, corrective action plan is required to ensure the school will receive two inspections per federal requirements. Schools in this situation will receive a letter of corrective action in January 2012.

Retirements
Connie Heck has retired as of January 1, 2012. Connie was an elementary teacher for 12 years prior to coming to ODE when she was hired as a school evaluator in the Elementary and Secondary Education Office in 1988. She later moved to a position in Federal Programs as a regional consultant conducting Title I reviews. She served as State Coordinator of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Grant during that time. She moved to her position in OCN as School Meal Programs Regional Consultant in 2004. She is looking forward to spending more time with her husband Gerald, daughter Gina, son-in law Jason, and twin grandsons Parker and Blake.

Welcome Aboard!

Carol Marples – Carol Marples has recently joined OCN as an Intermittent School Meal Programs consultant. Carol has worked for 28 years in Child Nutrition Programs, 23 years with School Lunch Programs. She graduated with a B.S. from University of Dayton and Masters in Nutrition and Food Systems from Miami University. In addition to her intermittent work with ODE, Carol is employed with Loveland City Schools as a part-time Child Nutrition Supervisor. She is an active member of SNA and President of Southern Ohio Directors' Association. Carol is an aspiring gardener, with a love of landscaping challenges, and she enjoys cooking and baking, and volunteering at her church.

Bernadette Paul - Bernadette Paul has also joined OCN as an intermittent School Meal Programs consultant. Bernadette is from Guyana, South America. She is a certified high school teacher and did her undergraduate degree in Nutrition in Brazil and her Master's Degree in Nutrition at Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a Nutritionist, responsible for nutrition education and hospital foodservice in her native country. She speaks fluent Portuguese and in her spare time she likes to watch Brazilian soaps, experiment with recipes and volunteer teaching nutrition at the community level.

Welcome Carol and Bernadette!

Contact ODE School Meal Programs Regional Consultants
Following are the 2011-2012 ODE School Meal Program Regional Consultants and the counties they service:

Vickie Bobbitt – phone number (614) 728-7756 and email Vickie.Bobbitt@ode.state.oh.us. Vickie serves Ashland, Coshocton, Erie, Holmes, Huron, Knox, Licking, Lorain, Medina, Richland, and Wayne Counties.

Mary Ann Delagrange – phone number (888) 332-8656 and email Mary.Delagrange@ode.state.oh.us. Mary Ann serves Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake Counties.

Liz Solomon – phone number (614) 466 –9273 and email Liz.Solomon@ode.state.oh.us. Liz serves Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, and Hamilton Counties.

Garrett "Chip" Kane - phone number (614) 995-5044 and email Garrett.Kane@ode.state.oh.us. Chip serves Crawford, Delaware, Hancock, Lucas, Marion, Morrow, Ottawa, Sandusky, Seneca, Wood, and Wyandot Counties.

Cheryl Ommert – phone number (614) 466 –9262 and email Cheryl.Ommert@ode.state.oh.us. Cheryl serves Ashtabula, Mahoning, Portage, Summit, and Trumbull Counties.

Lisa Shepherd - phone number (614) 466-1878 and email Lisa.Shepherd@ode.state.oh.us. Lisa serves Allen, Auglaize, Darke, Defiance, Fulton, Hardin, Henry, Mercer, Miami, Paulding, Putnam, Shelby, Van Wert, and Williams Counties.

Adrienne Durrett – phone number (614) 466-9523 and email Adrienne.Durrett@ode.state.oh.us. Adrienne serves Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Highland, Logan, Madison, Montgomery, Preble, Union, and Warren Counties.

Sandra Spann – phone number (614) 728-8095 and email Sandra.Spann@ode.state.oh.us. Sandra serves Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Guernsey, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Stark, Tuscarawas, and Washington Counties.

Sarina Wilks – phone number (614) 995-3866 and email Sarina.Wilks@ode.state.oh.us. Sarina serves Athens, Fairfield, Franklin, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties.

Sandy Hood – phone number (614) 466-7312 and email Sandy.Hood@ode.state.oh.us. Sandy serves all of the Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs) in Ohio.

Office for Child Nutrition (OCN)
Important Dates for National School Lunch Programs (NSLP)
Program Year (PY) is from July 1 through June 30 every year
PYs are named as the year in which the program ends (e.g. PY 2012 is 7/1/2011-6/30/2012)

SFA=School Food Authority, or the School District, used interchangeably with LEA=Local Education Agency
Direct Cert =Direct Certification, CRRS =Claims Reimbursement Reporting System, ODE=Ohio Department of Education, OCN=Office for Child Nutrition, CRE=On-Site review conducted periodically by OCN Regional Consultants

Date	Event	Local Education Agency (LEA) action required
Monthly	Monthly Claims for Reimbursement are due	Submit monthly claim on-line in CRRS by the 45th day after the end of each claiming month. www.education.ohio.gov *Search CRRS*
	Commodity Allocations Tracking System (CATS)	Log-in to CRRS and access CATS to complete the monthly release/order for Government Donated Foods and make payment for the monthly CATS invoice. www.education.ohio.gov *Search CRRS*
	Basic Training classes	Monthly training course that reviews the requirements of the National School Lunch, School Breakfast and After-School Care Snack Programs. www.education.ohio.gov *Search Basic Training (Create SAFE account to self-register)*
Annually	Breakfast Program Outreach to Families	Schools that offer the School Breakfast Program must send information to families notifying them of the breakfast program. This must be completed several times per year.
	Beginning of Program Year (July 1)	
July	CRRS New Program-Year Application	Submit the new program-year application in CRRS by September 30. www.education.ohio.gov *Search CRRS*
	Direct Cert	Complete Direct Cert process in CRRS. Format enrollment roster to "tab-delimited" format and upload to CRRS. CRRS will provide the list of matching names. Direct Cert must be completed 3 times per year.
	Student Applications for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals & Letter to Parents	Prototype published annually on the ODE/OCN website. www.education.ohio.gov *Search School Meals, Documents and Forms* Be sure to choose the correct form: 1) Fee waiver or 2) No fee waiver
	Public Release	Prototype published annually on ODE/OCN website. All schools that distribute the Student Meal Application MUST send a Public Release annually. www.education.ohio.gov *Search School Meals, Documents and Forms*
	Sharing of Information form is published	Written parent or guardian consent is required before students' free and reduced-price eligibility can be disclosed to any local education programs (e.g. free text books or reduced fees). Please contact your Regional Consultant for more guidance. 800-808-6325 *Eligibility Manual for School Meals, October 2011 at* www.education.ohio.gov *Search in School Meals.*
	Healthy Start, Healthy Families	Prototype published annually on the ODE/OCN website. www.education.ohio.gov *Search School Meals, Documents and Forms*. Either include this form with the Student Meal Application or post the flyer close to where the Student Meal Applications are available.
	Child Nutrition Summer Regional Workshops	Attend the OCN Summer Regional Workshops (held yearly in July and August). Call 800-808-6325 for more information. Self-register in CRRS.
First 4 weeks of Operation	After School Care Snack Program	All sites that operate the After School Care Snack Program must conduct a self-review by the school within the first 4-weeks of operation. A second review must be completed once more during the school year. Keep all records on file. www.education.ohio.gov *Search School Meals, Documents and Forms*

Every other Fall	Fall Management Conference	ODE/OCN holds a Fall Management Conference biennially. Check the web site for dates. *www.education.ohio.gov*
September and/or October	Pre CRE review workshops	Regional Consultants conduct a Pre-CRE review workshop for all schools that will receive their five-year cycle review. Contact your Regional Consultant for more information. *800-808-6325*
September 30	Current Program-Year CRRS Application approval deadline	LEAs must have an approved Application in CRRS. *www.education.ohio.gov Search CRRS*
October 1	Date in which the Verification Process begins	Verification activities begin at the LEA level. Refer to the "Verification Information Packet" or call your Regional Consultant for more information. 800-808-6325 *www.education.ohio.gov Search School Meals, Documents and Forms*
30th School Operating Day	Deadline for new Student Meal Applications	Student meal applications from the prior year may only be used for the first 30-operating days of the current school year. *Eligibility Manual for School Meals, Manual at www.education.ohio.gov Search in School Meals.*
31st Operating Day	Change eligibility status	Eligibility for those students without new program-year applications must be changed to Full-paid status and claimed as such. *Eligibility Manual for School Meals at www.education.ohio.gov School Meals*
November 15	Verification deadline	The Verification Process must be completed in each LEA (this is ***not*** the date required to submit Verification Summary in CRRS)
	Food Service Management Company (FSMC) bid writing and publishing	All FSMC bids and contracts must be pre-approved by ODE/OCN before they are published and signed, respectively. This process may take several months to complete. Start early!
January 14	Verification Summary Report submission deadline	Log-on to CRRS and submit the Verification Summary Report. Must be submitted without error prior to making November claim for reimbursement. *www.education.ohio.gov Search CRRS*
February	Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) training	Register with the ODE OCN office to attend a SFSP training session for either New or Existing Sponsors
February 1	On-site accountability reviews are required to be completed	All LEAs with multiple sites must complete the On-Site Accountability review for each site by February 1 of each year. Review forms available at *www.education.ohio.gov Search School Meals, Documents and Forms.*
March	Child Nutrition Summer Regional Training Workshops	Plan to attend the Child Nutrition Summer Regional Training Workshops (held in June, July and/or August). Call your Regional Consultant for more information. Self-register in CRRS.
	Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Program	Get information from your Regional Consultant about operating the SSO. If your school will offer summer activities, you may be eligible for the program.
Annually	Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Outreach	Near the end of each school year, school must access the OCN's Ohio map of SFSPs and notify households of programs in the area.
May	Next Program-Year application is published in CRRS	Next Program-Year Application is available in CRRS. *www.education.ohio.gov Search CRRS*
	Health Inspection Report	Submit the prior year's Health Inspection Report with the new CRRS Application documents. Must be completed before current Program-Year CRRS application may be approved. *www.education.ohio.gov Search CRRS*
June	**End of Program Year (June 30)**	

Resources

Ohio Department of Education (www.education.ohio.gov)
School Nutrition Association (www.SchoolNutrition.org)
USDA Food and Nutrition (www.fns.usda.gov)
Ohio School Nutrition Association (www.snaohio.org)

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