November Monthly Call

November 10, 2026

Today's Agenda

26-27 SY Administrative Reviews and Procurement Reviews
26-27 SY Reminders
Verification Process Reminders
Equipment Grant Reminders
Memos/Resources
Upcoming Trainings and Events

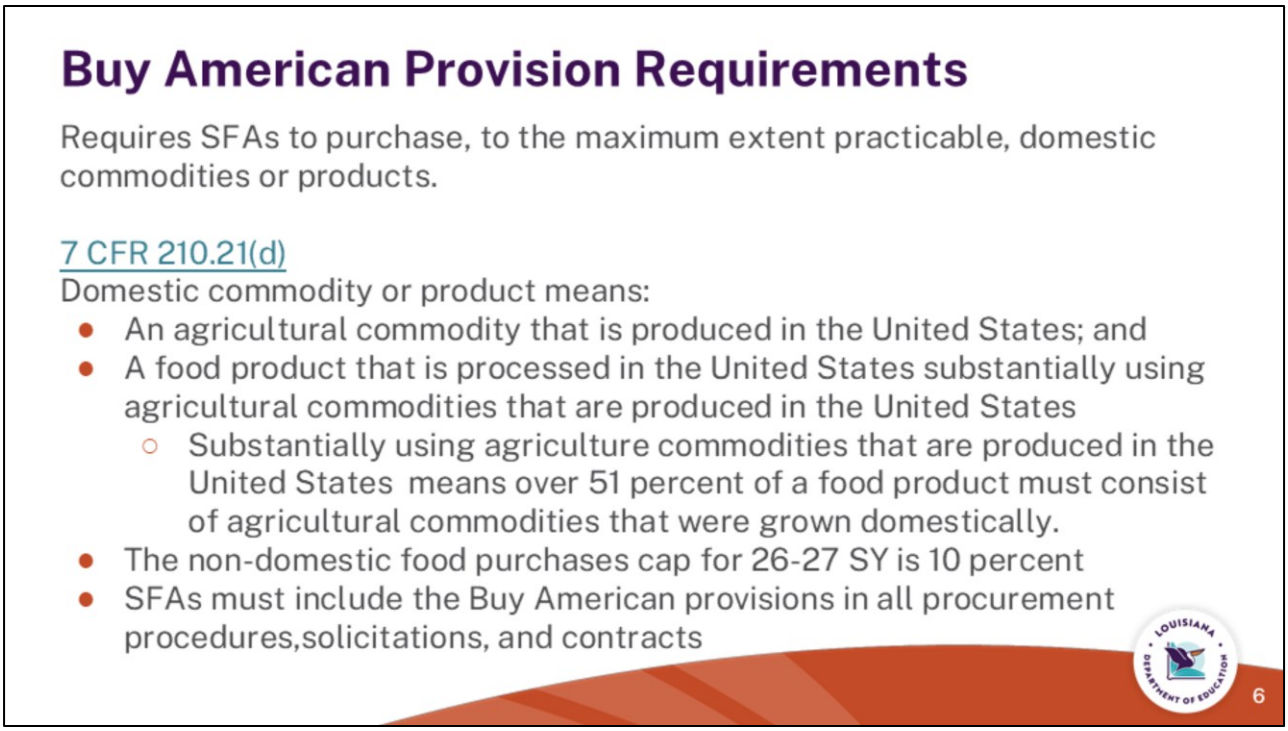
Administrative Reviews and Procurement Reviews

26-27 SY Administrative Reviews and Procurement Reviews

- 32 Administrative Review and Procurement Reviews scheduled
- SFAs scheduled for a AR/PR for the 26-27 SY were notified in May
- Official Announcement letters are being sent out to SFAs.
- LDOE is conducting approximately 50% of the scheduled AR/PR
- The rest of the scheduled reviews are being conducted by CNR
- 26 Follow Up Review will be conducted after the AR/PRs are completed

For the 26-27 SY, there are currently 32 reviews scheduled.
SFAs scheduled for a AR/PR for the 26-27 SY were notified in May via email. The official announcement letters are being sent out to SFAs.
LDOE is conducting approximately 50% of the scheduled AR/PR for the 26-27 SY.
The rest of the scheduled reviews are being conducted by CNR.
In addition, there are 26 Follow Up review scheduled that will be conducted after the AR/PRs are completed .

2026-2027 SY Reminders

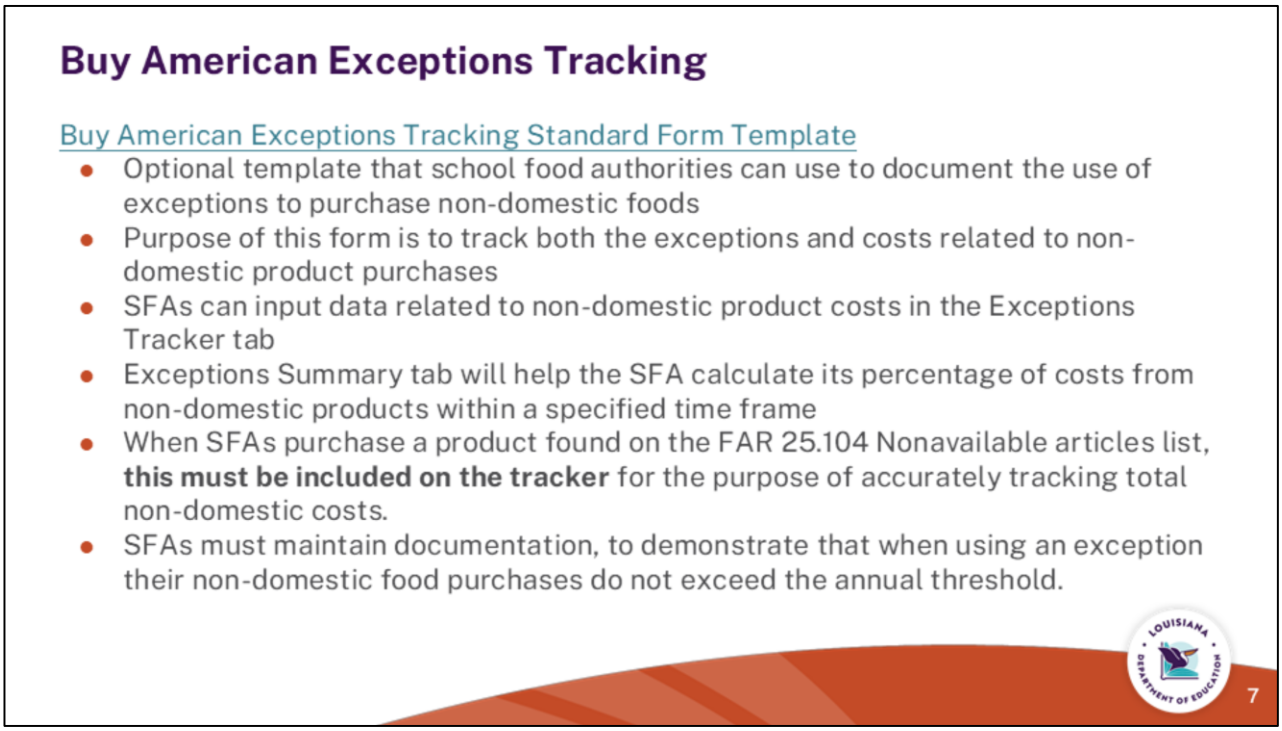


The Buy American provision requires SFAs to purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities or products.

Per 7 CFR 210.21(d)

Domestic commodity or product means:

- An agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States; and
- A food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States
    - Substantially using agriculture commodities that are produced in the United States means over 51 percent of a food product must consist of agricultural commodities that were grown domestically.
- The non-domestic food purchases cap for 26-27 SY is 10 percent
- SFAs must include the Buy American provisions in all procurement procedures,solicitations, and contracts



Buy American Exceptions Tracking Standard Form Template

The Exceptions Tracking Standard Form is an optional template that school food authorities can use to document the use of exceptions to purchase non-domestic foods under the Buy American provision.

The link on this slide will take you to the USDA website where you can find the tracking form which is under the resources materials.

The Buy American Exceptions Tacking Standards Form template has been added to the CNP website as well.

The purpose of this form is to track both the exceptions and costs related to non-domestic product purchases.

SFAs can input data related to non-domestic product costs in the Exceptions Tracker tab, and the Exceptions Summary tab will help the SFA calculate its percentage of costs from non-domestic products within a specified time frame.

When SFAs purchase a product found on the FAR 25.104 Nonavailable articles list, this must be included on the tracker for the purpose of accurately tracking total non-domestic costs.

SFAs must document the use of exceptions to purchase non-domestic products and must be able to produce this documentation as needed.

SFAs must maintain documentation, to demonstrate that when using an exception their non-domestic food purchases do not exceed the annual threshold.



Buy American Accommodation Process for SY 26-27

USDA has provided guidance on the SY 2026-2027 Buy American accommodation process.
The accommodation process provides the State agency the ability to approve temporary relief for school food authorities (SFAs) that demonstrate they cannot meet the thresholds for non-domestic food purchases.
The first threshold limit for non-domestic food purchases was implemented in SY 2025-2026 and was 10 percent of total commercial food expenditures.
Non-domestic food purchases made by SFAs could not exceed this annual threshold which was intended to shift more purchases toward domestic products.
For SY 2026-2027, the annual threshold for non-domestic food purchases will continue to be 10 percent of total commercial food expenditures.
SFAs seeking a temporary accommodation from the Buy American threshold requirement may complete and submit the SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2026-2027 to ChildNutritionPrograms@LA.GOV
State agency will provide technical assistance to SFAs to support the temporary accommodation as SFAs demonstrate they are unable to meet the requirement and work with the SFA to increase their domestic purchases.

SFA Buy American Accommodation Plan SY 2026-2027



SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2026-2027

Select all categories of food that require accommodation from the threshold requirement (i.e. exceeding 10 percent):

- ☐ Fruits
- ☐ Vegetables
- ☐ Fruit/Vegetable Juices
- ☐ Meats/Meat Alternates
- ☐ Grains (Cereals)
- ☐ Other, please specify:

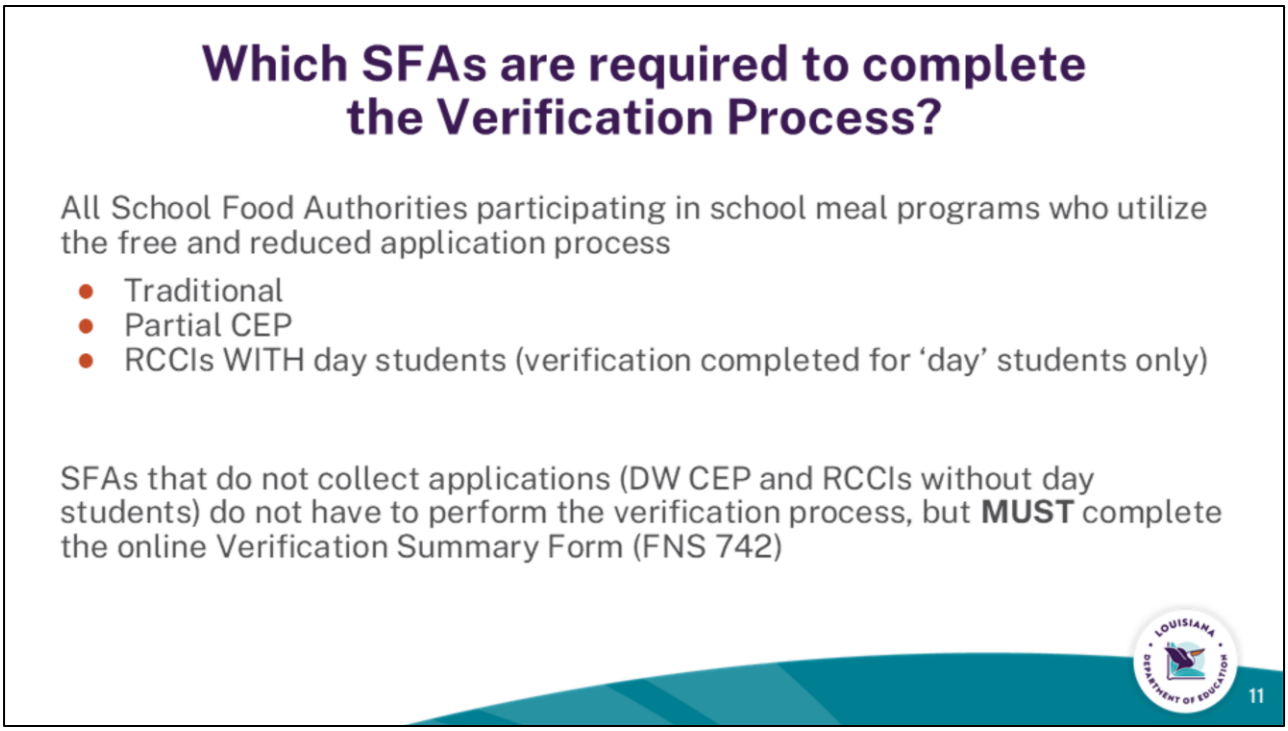
Select all that apply as reasons for the accommodation from the threshold requirement (i.e. exceeding 10 percent):

- ☐ Timing of procurement cycle
- ☐ Student preference/anticipated participation impacts
- ☐ Items that help meet meal standards
- ☐ Items that facilitate meal service models (grab n' go, Breakfast in the Classroom)
- ☐ Difficulty in procuring items due to seasonality
- ☐ Vendor-related issues (e.g., pricing, documentation, and tracking)
- ☐ Other, please specify:

Briefly describe the anticipated timeline to make modifications to meet the Buy American requirements (This could include timing of calculating the baseline percentage of non-domestic food purchases (or include the baseline percentage, if available), obtaining documentation, and balancing the accommodation and exception process with making menu changes).

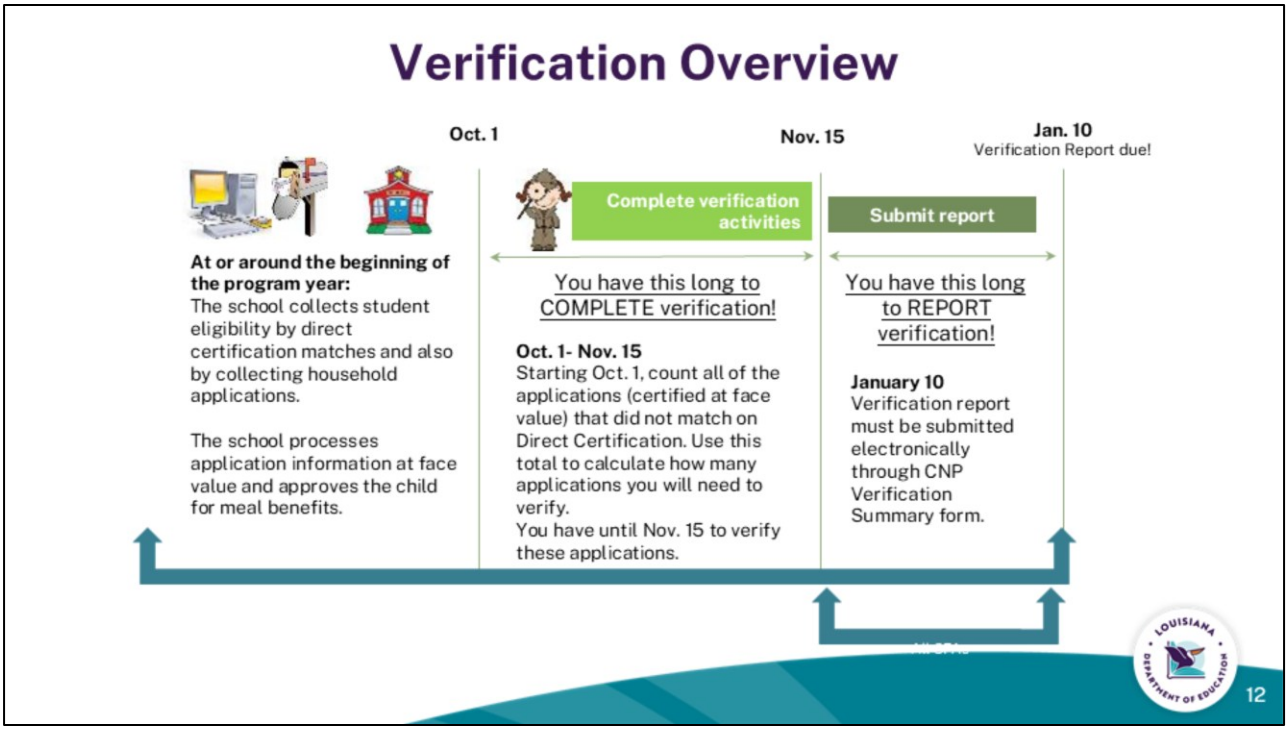
This is what the SFA Buy American Accommodation Plan for SY 26-27 looks like. It can be found on the LDOE CNP website.
SFAs seeking a temporary accommodation from the Buy American threshold requirement may complete and submit the SFA Accommodation Plan SY 2026-2027 to ChildNutritionPrograms@LA.GOV

Verification Process Reminders



The verification process is required for any participating SFA that uses free and reduced applications: traditional SFAs, partial CEP, and RCCIs with day students. Partial CEP districts will have to complete the entire verification process only on the schools who are not CEP.

SFAs that do not collect applications (DW CEP and RCCIs without day students) do not have to perform the verification process, but MUST complete the online Verification Summary Form (FNS 742)



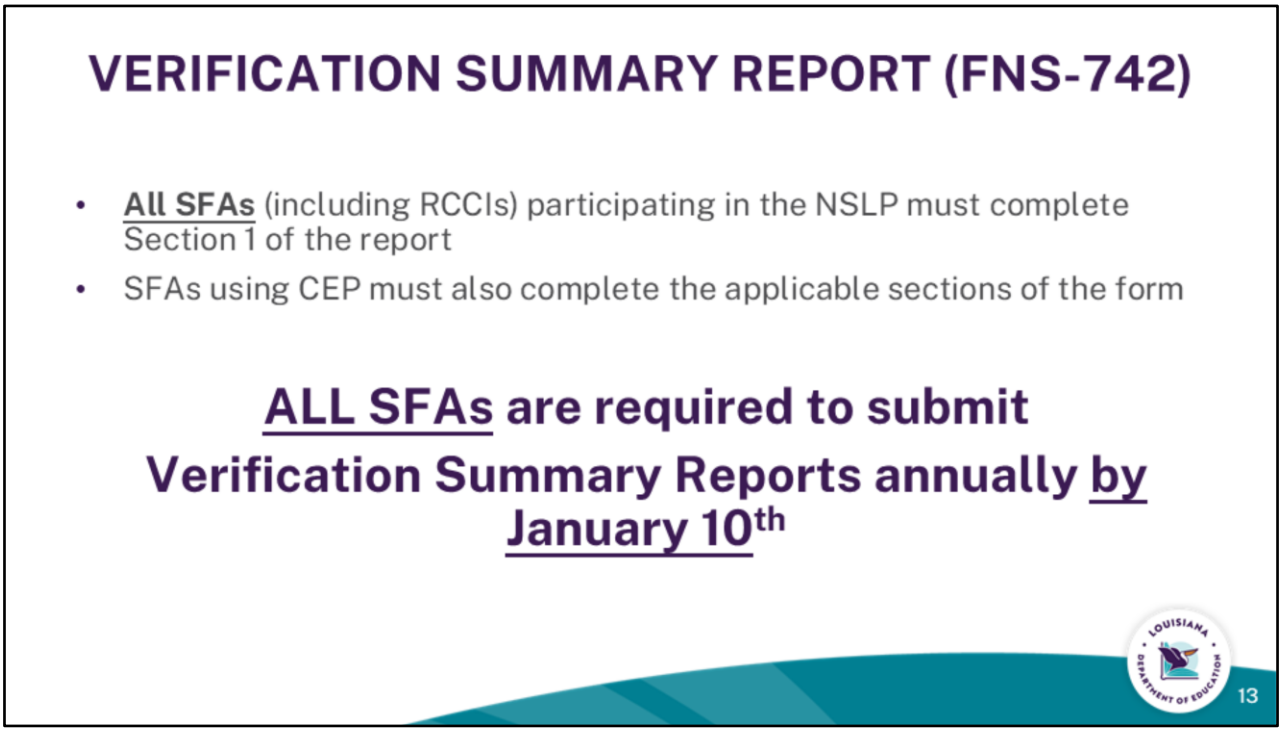
At, or near the beginning of the year, SFAs will collect student eligibility in two ways: through Direct Certification matches and through household applications.

Starting October 1, count all of the applications (certified at face value) that did not match on Direct Certification. Applications that were submitted and found through direct certification are not eligible for verification. Use this total to calculate how many applications you need to verify. You have until November 15th to verify these applications.

November 15th thru January 10th is the timeline to report the results of Verification on the Verification Summary Form. ALL SFAs, regardless of their type, are required to report results because it includes additional information used by USDA such as enrollment, identified students, and the number of operating sites per SFA.

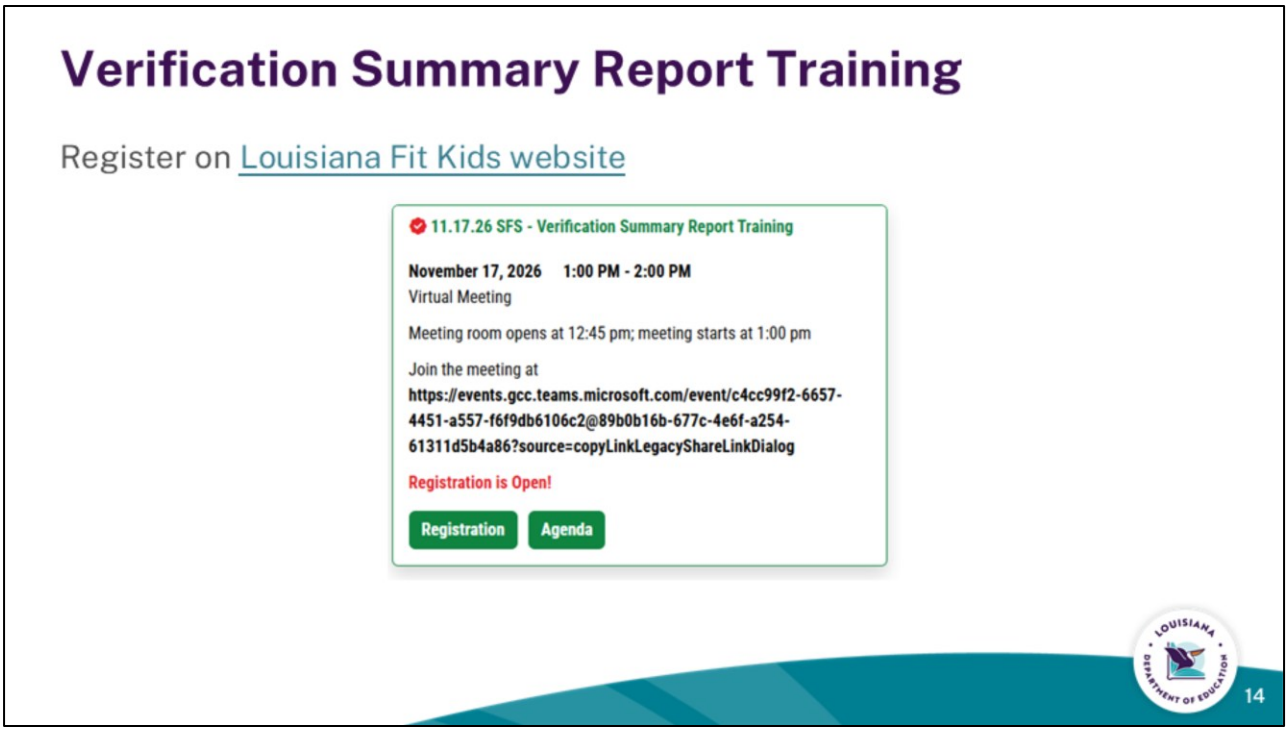
*** Important note on deadlines:**

- **If Nov 15th or Jan 10th falls on a weekend (which both fall on a Sunday this SY), verification activities and verification reporting MUST be completed by the deadline.**



The final step of the Verification Process is to complete the Verification Summary Report (FNS-742) on the CNP website. This will be discussed in greater detail in the Part 2 Verification Process - Verification Summary Report training next week. The report will become available to edit after the training and is due on January 10th annually.

Please note that ALL SFAs participating in the NSLP, including DW CEP and RCCIs, must complete the FNS-742 Verification Report.



The upcoming training on the Verification Summary Report is November 17th at 1:00. Please register on the Louisiana Fit Kids website

Verification Questions

Kylee Champagne & Tosha Washington
kylee.champagne@la.gov | tosha.washington2@la.gov

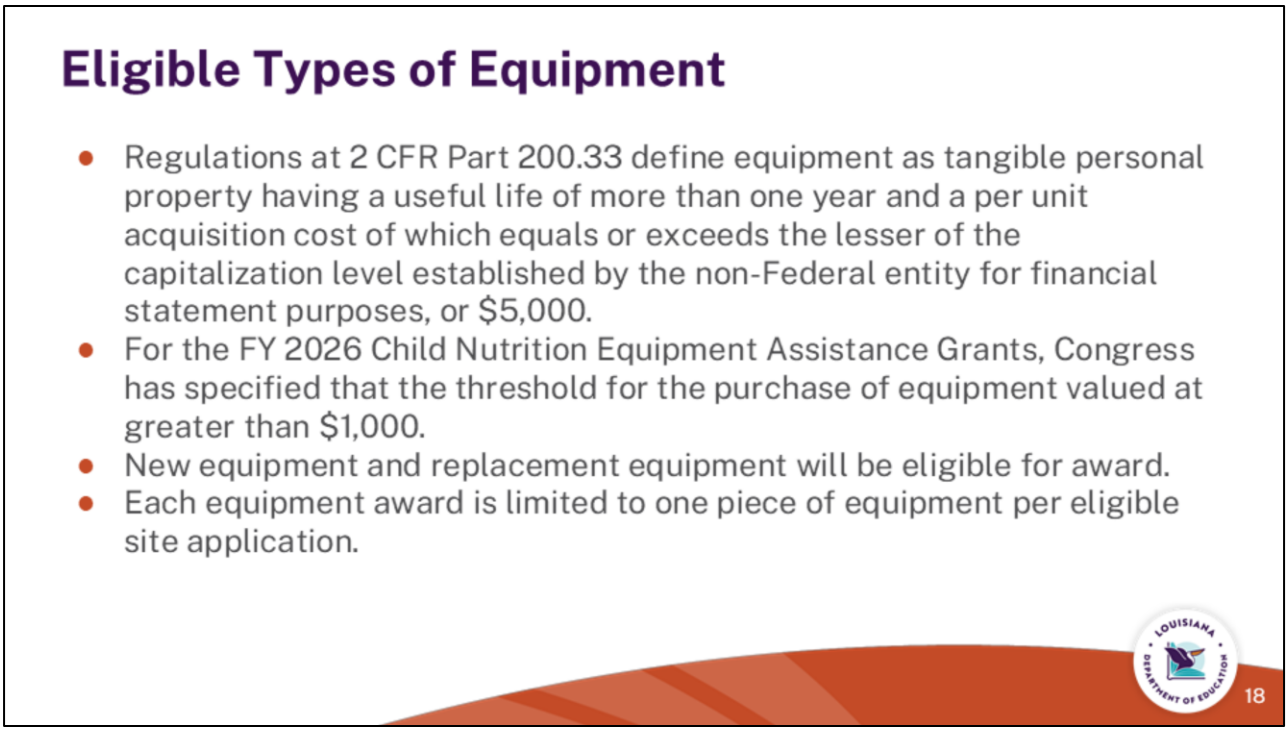
LDOE Division of Nutrition Support
childnutritionprograms@la.gov
225-342-9661

FY 2026 Child Nutrition Equipment Assistance Grant

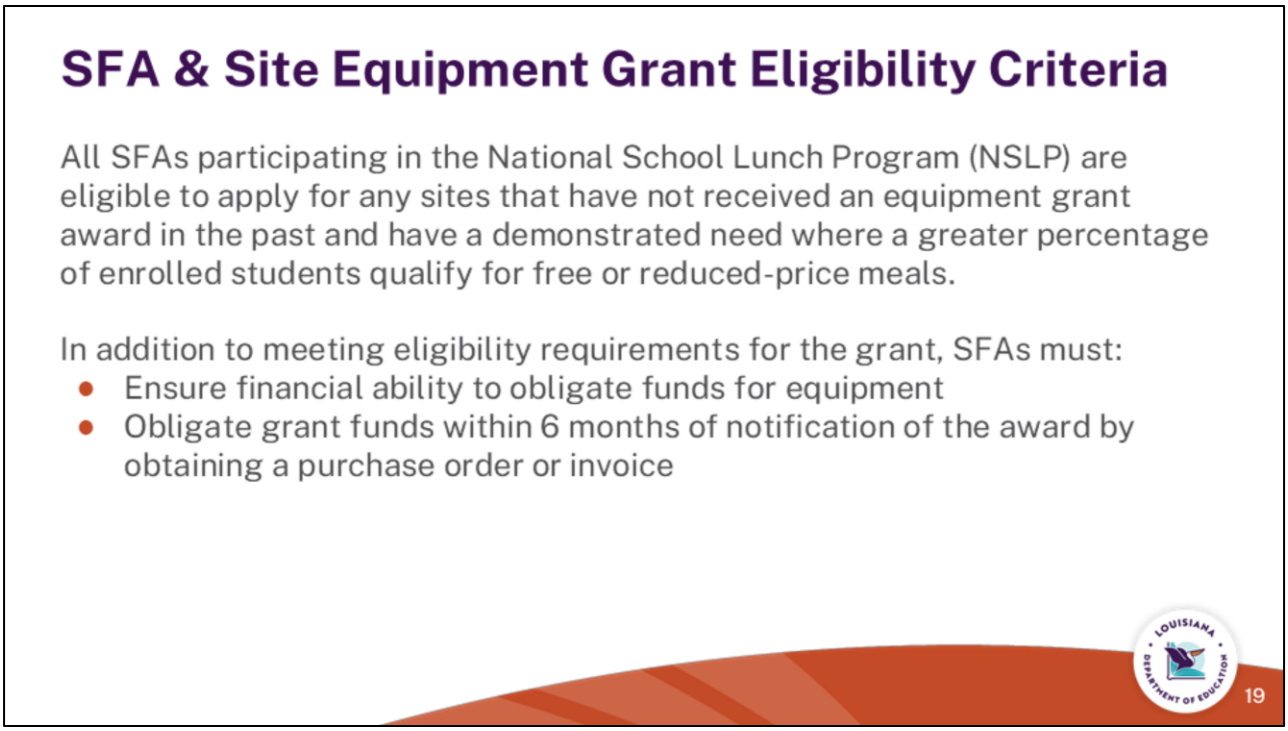
Reminders



The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2025 (Public Law 119-4) has provided $20 million to State agencies to competitively award Equipment Assistance Grants to eligible School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
Louisiana has been allocated $377,918.00



Regulations at 2 CFR Part 200.33 define equipment as tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost of which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000.
For the FY 2026 Child Nutrition Equipment Assistance Grants, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment valued at greater than $1,000. The State agency strongly encourages SFAs to identify equipment that will make the greatest impact on school food service operations based on the goals described in the grant. Typically, such items have a cost greater than $5,000.
New equipment and replacement equipment will be eligible for award.
Each equipment award is limited to one piece of equipment per eligible site application.



All SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to apply for any sites that have not received an equipment grant award in the past and have a demonstrated need where a greater percentage of enrolled students qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

In addition to meeting eligibility requirements for the grant, SFAs must:

- Ensure financial ability to obligate funds for equipment
- Obligate grant funds within 6 months of notification of the award by obtaining a purchase order or invoice



Equipment Grant Online Application Dates
Opened October 14, 2026
Closes November 16, 2026

Submission of the Online 2026 Equipment Grant application must be completed by November 16, 2026.

Notification of Awards will take place by December 11, 2026.
The award notification will include the amount of the grant and detailed instructions on how to request funding.

SFAs Must Obligate Funds by June 11, 2027(Purchase Order or Invoice)

SFAs Must Submit a Request for Reimbursement by June 11, 2027.

Equipment Grant Training

Slides and Recording are posted on Louisiana Fit Kids website



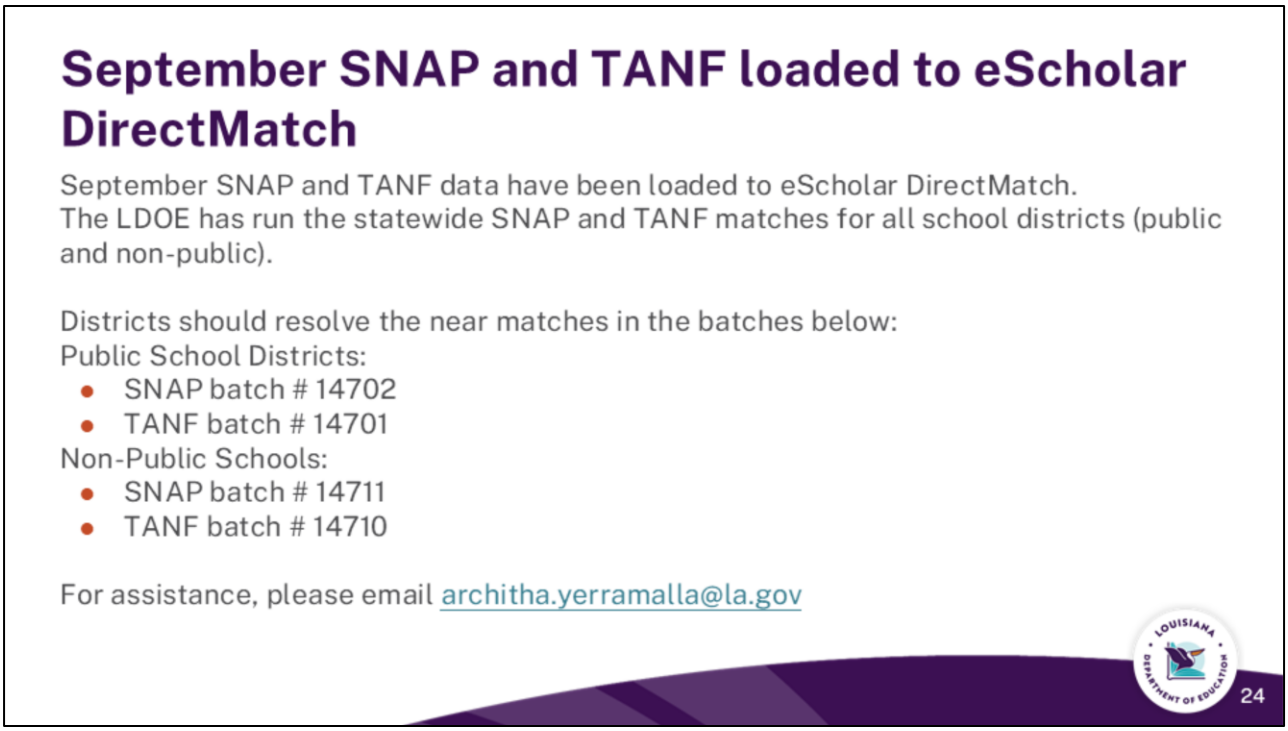
If you were unable to attend the Equipment grant training that took place on October 13th, the training recording and slides have been posted to LA Fit Kids website.

Equipment Grant Questions

Stacie Griffin
stacie.griffin@la.gov
225-342-3677

LDOE Division of Nutrition Support
childnutritionprograms@la.gov
225-342-9661

Memos/Resources

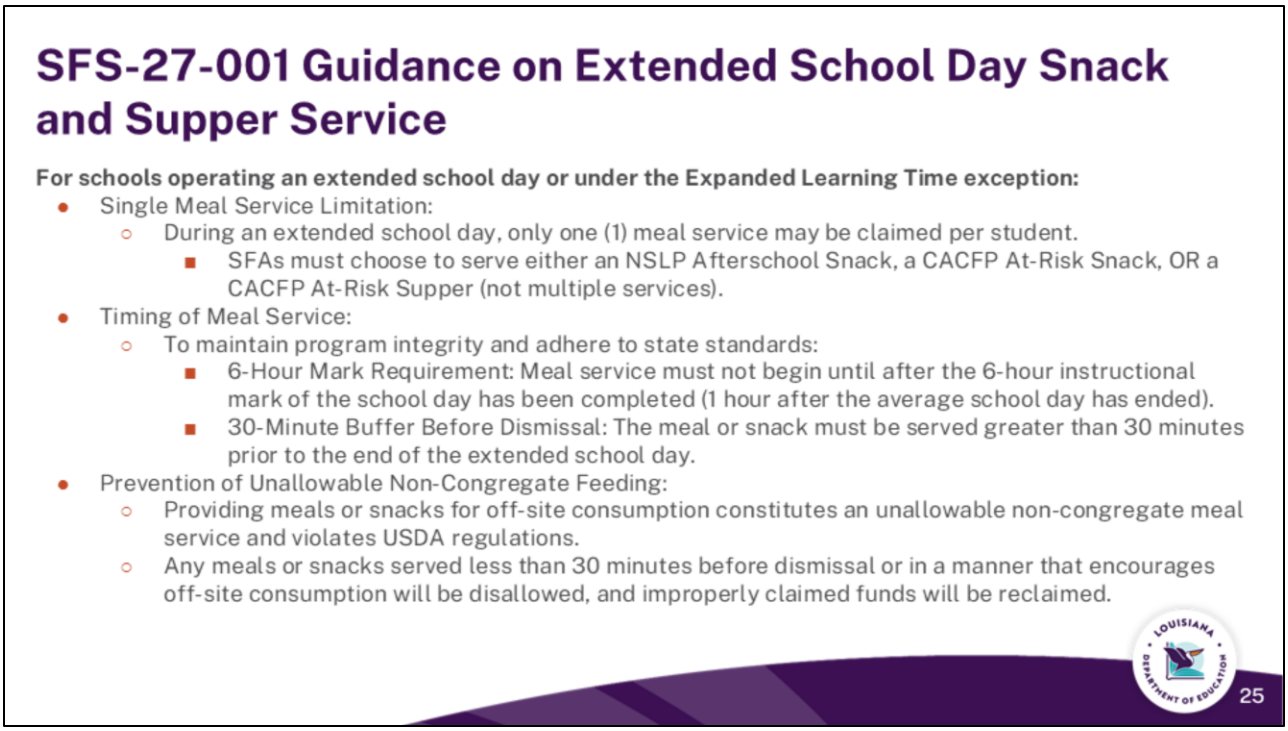


September SNAP and TANF data have been loaded to eScholar DirectMatch.
The LDOE has run the statewide SNAP and TANF matches for all school districts (public and non-public).

Districts should resolve the near matches in the batches below:
Public School Districts:
- SNAP batch # 14702
- TANF batch # 14701

Non-Public Schools:
- SNAP batch # 14711
- TANF batch # 14710

For assistance, please email architha.yerramalla@la.gov



SFS-27-001 Guidance on Extended School Day Snack and Supper Service

This memo provides updated guidance regarding the operation of afterschool snack and meal services in schools operating an extended school day or under the Expanded Learning Time exception. Additionally, this memo outlines critical procurement and contracting requirements for SFAs utilizing vended meal services for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Program.

Extended School Day meals are granted for schools that operate one hour or more than the average school day. For this school year, the average school day is 6 hours, meaning schools with 7 hours of instructional time may operate an extended school day program. This initiative is designed to ensure students receive the necessary nutritional support to sustain them throughout extended school hours. The primary purpose of these meals is to provide necessary nutrition to help students complete their supervised, structured afterschool activities. **These meals are intended to be consumed on-site and are not to be served as meals to be taken home.**

For schools operating an extended school day or under the Expanded Learning Time exception:

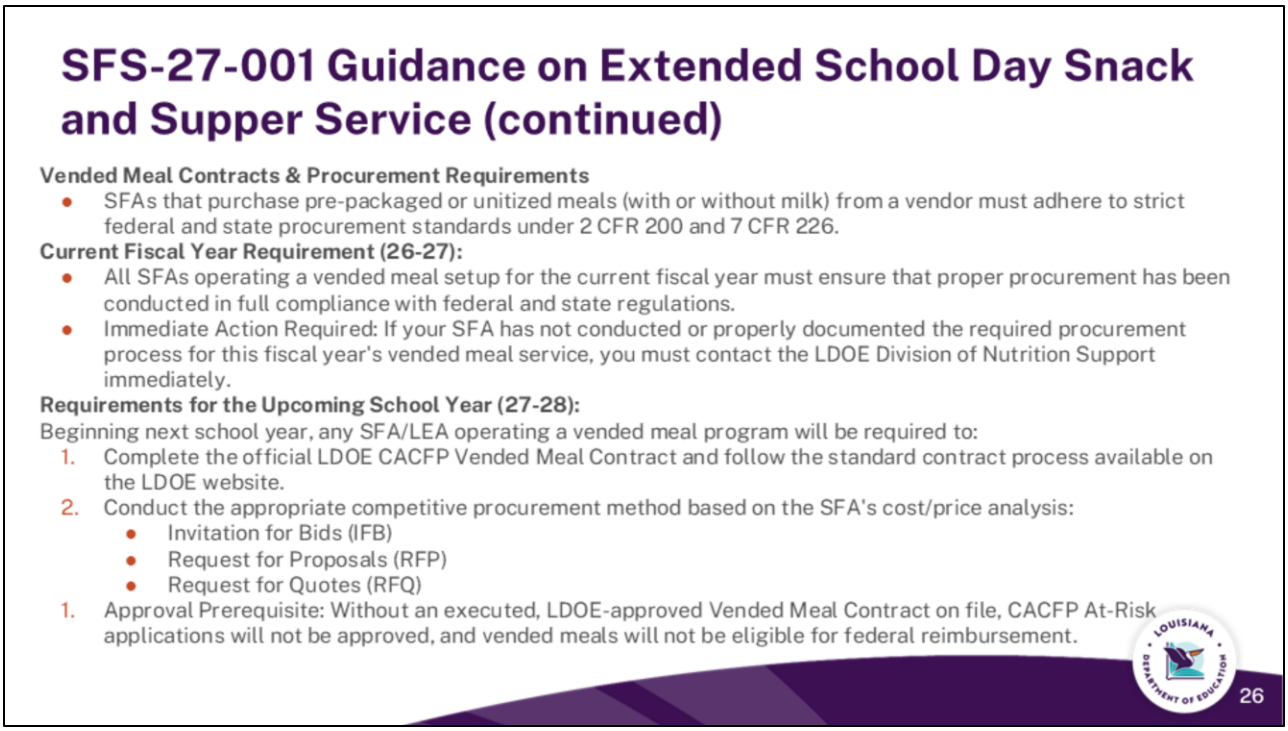
- Single Meal Service Limitation:
  - During an extended school day, only one (1) meal service may be claimed per student.
    - SFAs must choose to serve either an NSLP Afterschool Snack, a CACFP At-Risk Snack, OR a CACFP At-Risk Supper (not multiple services).
- Timing of Meal Service:
  - To maintain program integrity and adhere to state standards:
    - 6-Hour Mark Requirement: Meal service must not begin until after the 6-hour instructional mark of the school day has been completed (1 hour after the average school day has ended).
    - 30-Minute Buffer Before Dismissal: The meal or snack must be served greater than 30 minutes prior to the end of the extended school day.
- Prevention of Unallowable Non-Congregate Feeding:
  - Serving meals or snacks too close to the dismissal bell often leads to students taking food off campus. Providing meals or snacks for off-site consumption constitutes an unallowable non-congregate meal service and violates USDA regulations. Any meals or snacks served less than 30 minutes before dismissal or in a manner that encourages off-site consumption will be disallowed, and improperly claimed funds will be reclaimed.

If you have questions regarding Expanded Learning Time eligibility or meal service scheduling, please contact our office:

NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Trandra Scott – trandra.scott@la.gov

CACFP At-Risk Meals/Snacks & Vended Contracts: Karen Schexneider – karen.schexneider@la.gov

General Inquiries & Document Submissions: childnutritionprograms@la.gov or (225) 342-9661



SFS-27-001 Guidance on Extended School Day Snack and Supper Service

Vended Meal Contracts & Procurement Requirements

- SFAs that purchase pre-packaged or unitized meals (with or without milk) from a vendor must adhere to strict federal and state procurement standards under 2 CFR 200 and 7 CFR 226.

Current Fiscal Year Requirement (26-27):

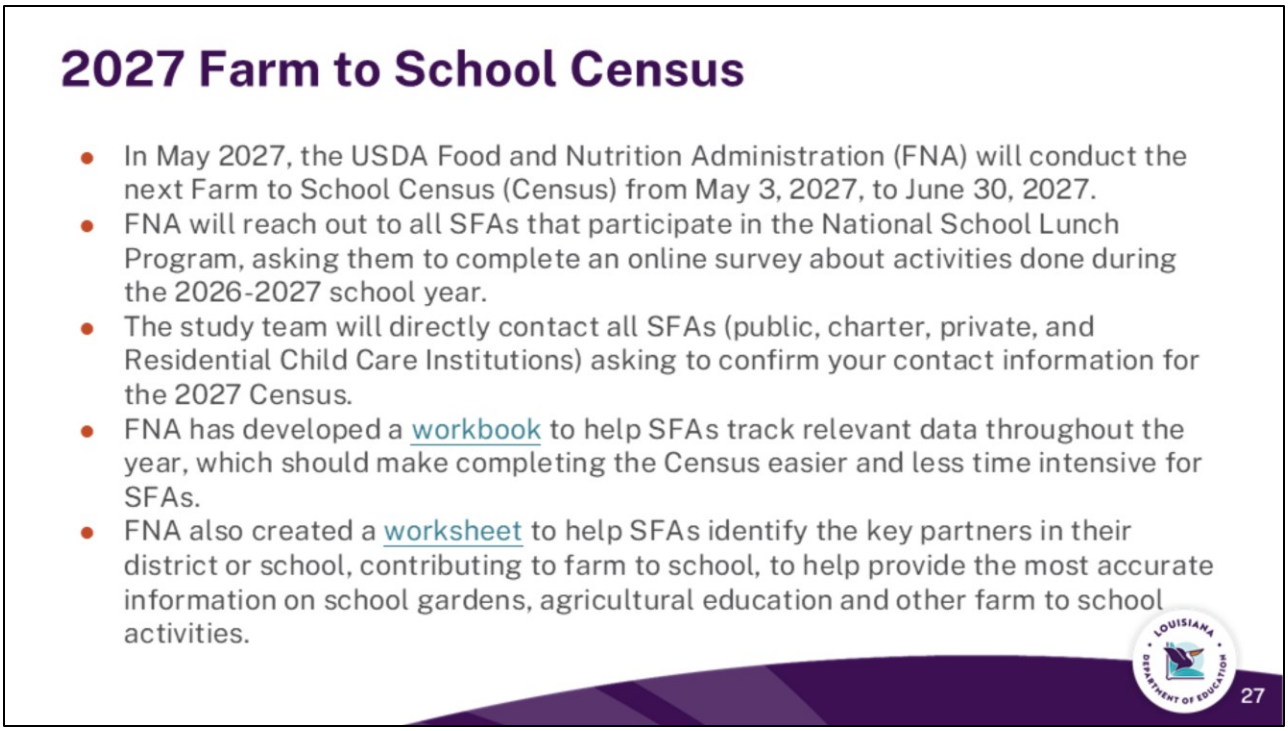
- All SFAs operating a vended meal setup for the current fiscal year must ensure that proper procurement has been conducted in full compliance with federal and state regulations.
- Immediate Action Required: If your SFA has not conducted or properly documented the required procurement process for this fiscal year's vended meal service, you must contact the LDOE Division of Nutrition Support immediately.

Requirements for the Upcoming School Year (27-28):

Beginning next school year, any SFA/LEA operating a vended meal program will be required to:

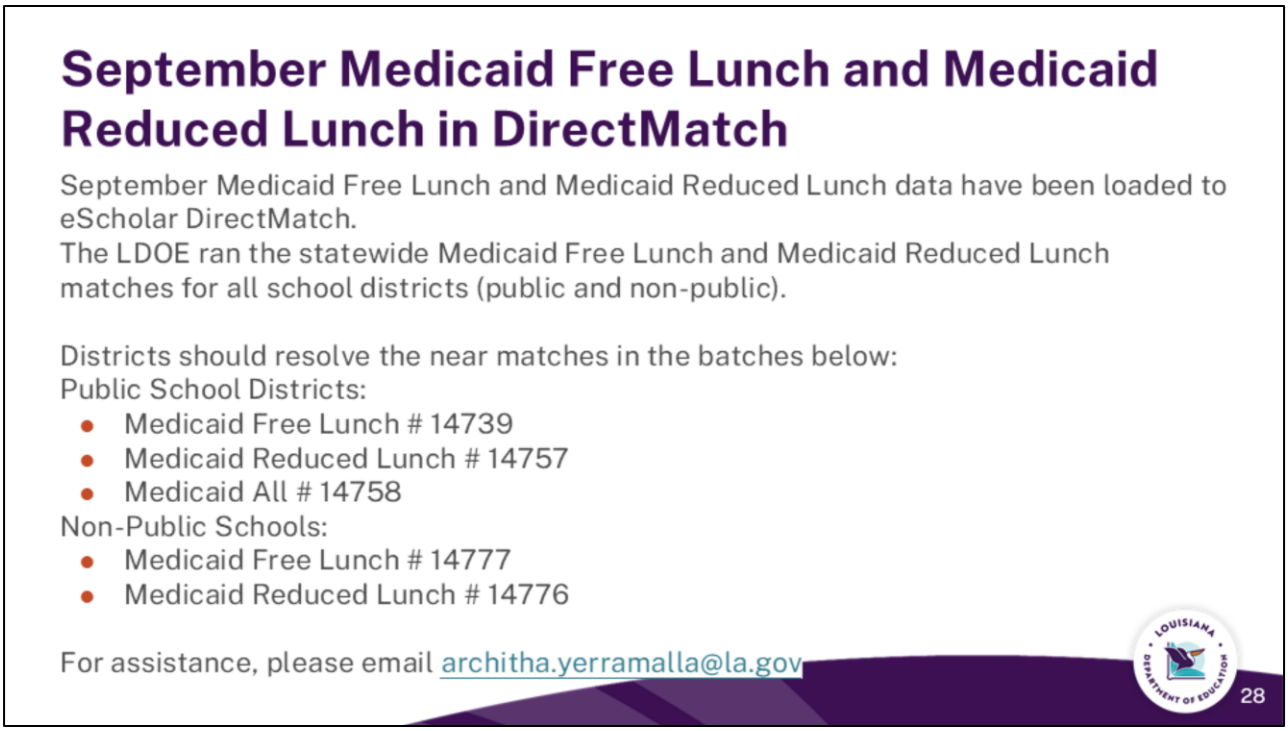
1. Complete the official LDOE CACFP Vended Meal Contract and follow the standard contract process available on the LDOE website.
2. Conduct the appropriate competitive procurement method based on the SFA's cost/price analysis:
    - Invitation for Bids (IFB)
    - Request for Proposals (RFP)
    - Request for Quotes (RFQ)
1. Approval Prerequisite: Without an executed, LDOE-approved Vended Meal Contract on file, CACFP At-Risk applications will not be approved, and vended meals will not be eligible for federal reimbursement.

If you have questions regarding vended meal procurement, please contact our office:
CACFP At-Risk Meals/Snacks & Vended Contracts: Karen Schexneider – karen.schexneider@la.gov
General Inquiries & Document Submissions: childnutritionprograms@la.gov or (225) 342-9661



In May 2027, the USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) will conduct the next Farm to School Census (Census) from May 3, 2027, to June 30, 2027.
The Census is carried out every four years to learn how local foods and food and agriculture education are being used in schools across the country.
The Census is the most comprehensive source of farm to school data in the country, and it is a crucial tool in understanding and promoting local food procurement and food and agricultural education.
FNA will reach out to all SFAs that participate in the National School Lunch Program, asking them to complete an online survey about activities done during the 2026-2027 school year. Like past Censuses, the findings will be made public in a final report and on a public website
The study team will directly contact all SFAs (public, charter, private, and Residential Child Care Institutions) asking to confirm your contact information for the 2027 Census. Please reply promptly to help improve the State's response rate and ensures the results better reflect actual farm to school participation.
For the 2027 Census, we encourage SFAs to form teams to help answer Census questions. Many districts may already have groups, such as an existing farm to school team or local wellness policy council, that can fill this role. Farm to school programs are built by the hard work of school food services, producers, teachers, volunteers, parents, students, and more. While SFA directors hold the subject matter expertise on local sourcing, we encourage them to recognize the many different roles contributing to their district or school's farm to school programs and engage these experts in accurately documenting the depth and breadth of their programs. This can include garden coordinators, classroom educators, and more. We hope that this year's Census goes quickly and smoothly with the help of the many experts who offer valuable insight into your programs.

FNA has developed a workbook to help SFAs track relevant data throughout the year, which should make completing the Census easier and less time intensive for SFAs.
FNA also created a worksheet to help SFAs identify the key partners in their district or school, contributing to farm to school, to help provide the most accurate information on school gardens, agricultural education and other farm to school activities.



September Medicaid Free Lunch and Medicaid Reduced Lunch data have been loaded to eScholar DirectMatch.
The LDOE ran the statewide Medicaid Free Lunch and Medicaid Reduced Lunch matches for all school districts (public and non-public).

Districts should resolve the near matches in the batches below:
Public School Districts:

- Medicaid Free Lunch # 14739
- Medicaid Reduced Lunch # 14757
- Medicaid All # 14758

Non-Public Schools:

- Medicaid Free Lunch # 14777
- Medicaid Reduced Lunch # 14776

For assistance, please email architha.yerramalla@la.gov



This critical security advisory Cybersecurity Alert: Fraudulent Emails Impersonating State Employees from the Louisiana Department of Education was sent out on October 22nd.

The Louisiana Office of Technology Services (OTS) has alerted state agencies to an active phishing campaign utilizing the fraudulent domain @la-gov.us to impersonate State of Louisiana and LDOE personnel.
Perpetrators are targeting school districts and program sponsors in an attempt to divert program reimbursements, alter banking/ACH records, or capture administrative login credentials.
While OTS has blocked this malicious domain on state networks, your district or organization email servers may still receive messages from it.

Action Required:

- **Identify the Look-Alike Domain**: Authentic State of Louisiana communications only come from @la.gov. Any address ending in @la-gov.us (with a hyphen and ending in .us) is fraudulent.
- **Do Not Reply**: Do not click links, open attachments, or reply to messages from this look-alike domain.
- **Verify Changes Independently**: LDOE will never ask you to change banking or reimbursement routing instructions via an unsolicited link. Always verify any urgent compliance, claiming, or fiscal request by contacting your assigned state program monitor directly using established @la.gov email addresses or known office phone numbers.

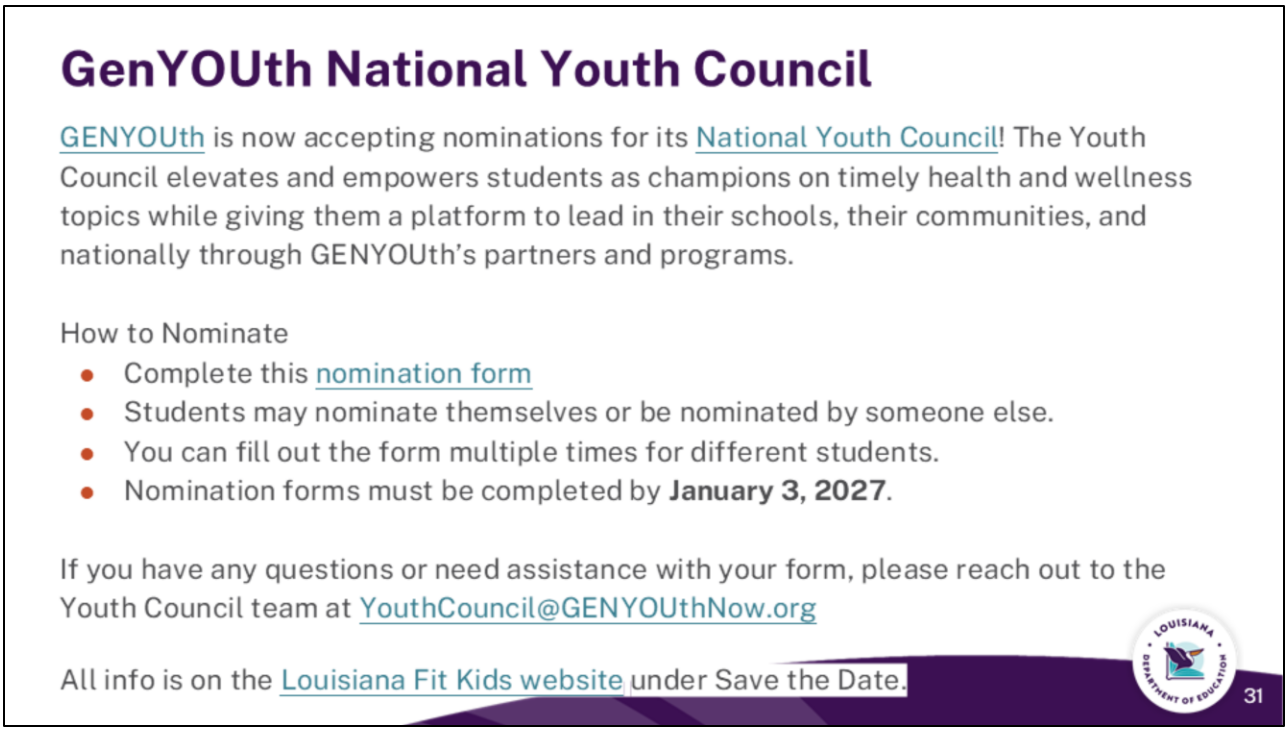
Please distribute this alert immediately to your Food Service Directors, Business Managers, Accounts Payable staff, and IT/Technology departments.



Each SFA participating in the NSLP is eligible to submit applications on behalf of eligible individual school sites that wish to receive a NSLP equipment assistance grant. Grant applications are available for online submission at the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) website. Access to the online equipment grant application portal is restricted to designated CNP Administrators (Superintendent and CNP Authorized Representative) listed on the CNP Permanent Agreement.

Application available online: October 14, 2026
Deadline to submit: November 16, 2026
NO APPLICATION OR REVISION TO THE APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED PAST THE DUE DATE.

Grant applicants that are approved for award will be notified in writing by December 11, 2026.
Equipment funds should be expended or obligated no later than 6 months after notification of the award.



GENYOUth is now accepting nominations for its National Youth Council! The Youth Council elevates and empowers students as champions on timely health and wellness topics while giving them a platform to lead in their schools, their communities, and nationally through GENYOUth's partners and programs.
You and your colleagues may help us find the next generation of leaders committed to creating healthier school communities.
Nominated students will receive an invitation to apply, and new council members will be selected by GENYOUth and the current National Youth Council through an application and interview process.

Nominations close Sunday, January 3, 2027.

Student Applicant Requirements

- Students must be in grades 8, 9, or 10 THIS school year (2026 – 2027). Current 11th and 12th graders are not eligible.
- Students must attend a public school (including public charter schools) located in the United States.
- Students must be interested in creating positive changes and committed to completing a project related to nutrition or physical activity that can be implemented during the 2027-2028 school year.
- Students must be willing and able to attend virtual meetings once a month and be responsive and communicative with the GENYOUth team throughout the year.
- Students must be available to attend an in-person training over the summer in 2027. Exact dates and location to be shared at the time of application. Travel expenses will be covered by GENYOUth.

How to Nominate

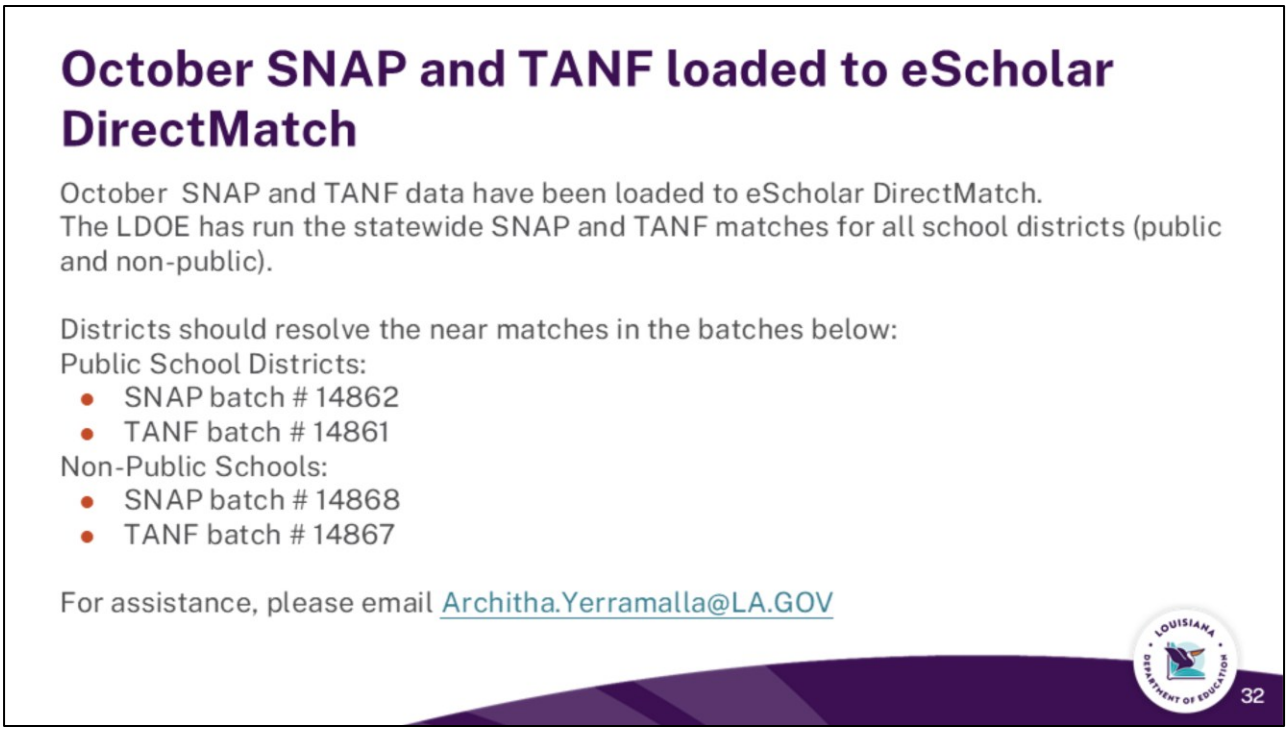
- Complete this nomination form.
- Students may nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else.
- You can fill out the form multiple times for different students.
- Nomination forms must be completed by January 3, 2027.

What Happens After Nomination

Nominated students will receive an email from YouthCouncil@GENYOUthNow.org with a link to an application on or before January 5, 2027.
GENYOUth staff and National Youth Council members will review applications and invite the strongest applicants to interview.
New National Youth Council members will be selected and announced by May 2027.

If you have any questions or need assistance with your form, please reach out to the Youth Council team at YouthCouncil@GENYOUthNow.org

All info is on the Louisiana Fit Kids website under Save the Date.



The October SNAP and TANF data have been loaded to eScholar DirectMatch. The LDOE has run the statewide SNAP and TANF matches for all school districts (public and non-public).

Districts should resolve the near matches in the batches below:
Public School Districts:

- SNAP batch # 14862
- TANF batch # 14861

Non-Public Schools:

- SNAP batch # 14868
- TANF batch # 14867

For assistance, please email Architha.Yerramalla@LA.GOV

Trainings and Events



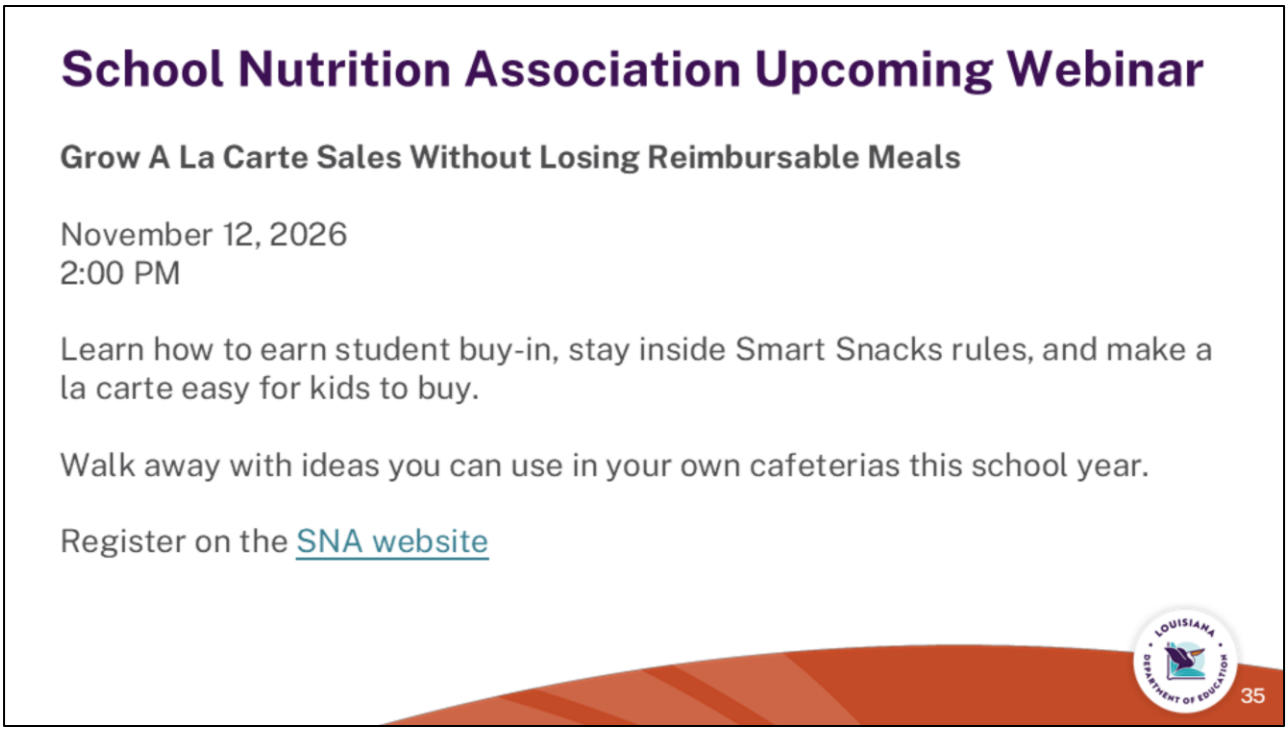
Let's go over some upcoming LDOE trainings.

Today, November 10th is our monthly call.
The Verification Summary Form training will be on November 17th.

December 1st will be the December monthly call.
On December 3rd we will have an in person Procurement training at Pennington.

January 5th will be the January monthly call.
On January 13th we will have the annual FSMC contracts and Vended Meals contract trainings at Pennington.
On January 14th will be our next in person State Update at Pennington.

Register on LA Fit Kids website
https://www.louisianafitkids.com/Meetings/Home/MeetingRegistration/



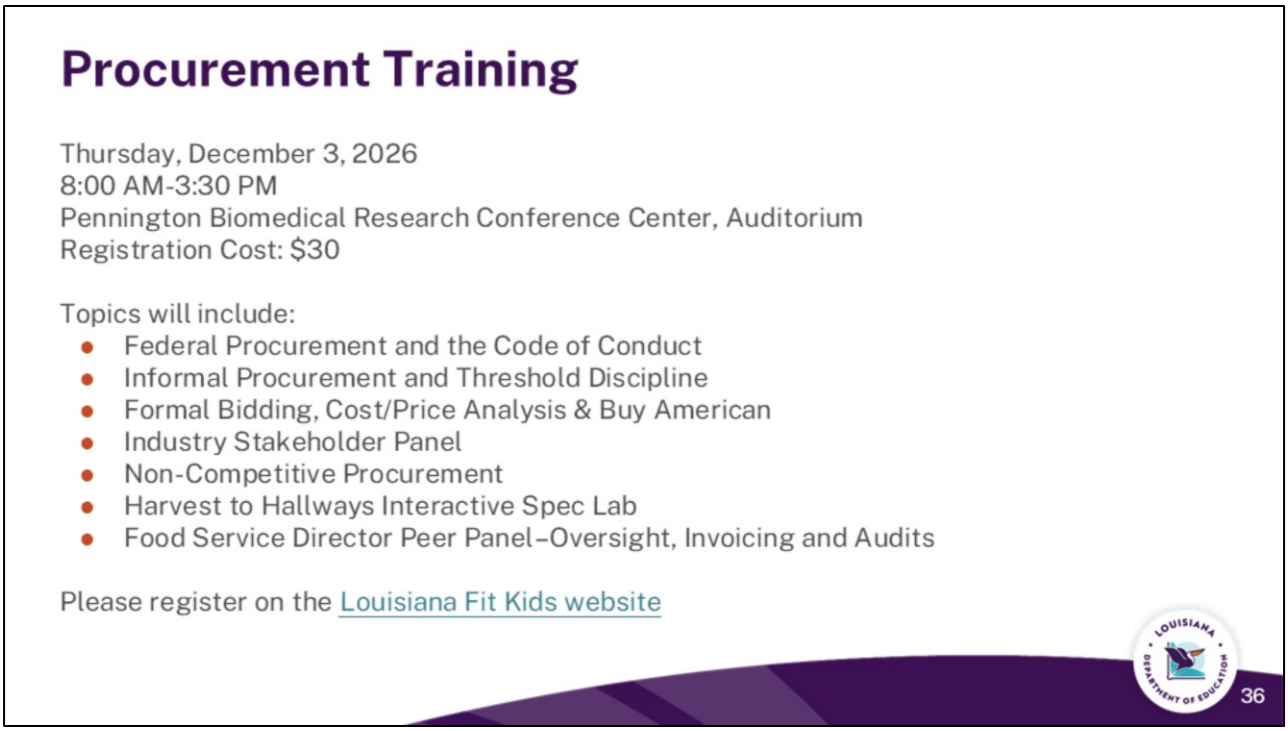
SNA has an upcoming webinar entitled Grow A La Carte Sales Without Losing Reimbursable Meals.

November 12, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Learn how to earn student buy-in, stay inside Smart Snacks rules, and make a la carte easy for kids to buy.

Walk away with ideas you can use in your own cafeterias this school year.

Register on the SNA website



The Louisiana Department of Education Division of Nutrition Support would like to invite and encourage all SFAs to attend an essential upcoming in-person Procurement training.

Date: Thursday, December 3, 2026
Time: 8:00 AM-3:30 PM
Location: Pennington Biomedical Research Center, 6400 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, C.B. Pennington Jr. Conference Center, Auditorium
Registration Cost: $30

Topics will include:
- Federal Procurement and the Code of Conduct
- Informal Procurement and Threshold Discipline
- Formal Bidding, Cost/Price Analysis & Buy American
- Industry Stakeholder Panel
- Non-Competitive Procurement
- Harvest to Hallways Interactive Spec Lab
- Food Service Director Peer Panel–Oversight, Invoicing and Audits

Please register on the Louisiana Fit Kids website



Please save the dates for the upcoming trainings that will occur over the summer months.
Please note that more information on these trainings is to come and the registration will be posted at a later time.

There will be two options for manager training.
The virtual manager training will be June 21-23.
The in person manager training will be July 19-21.

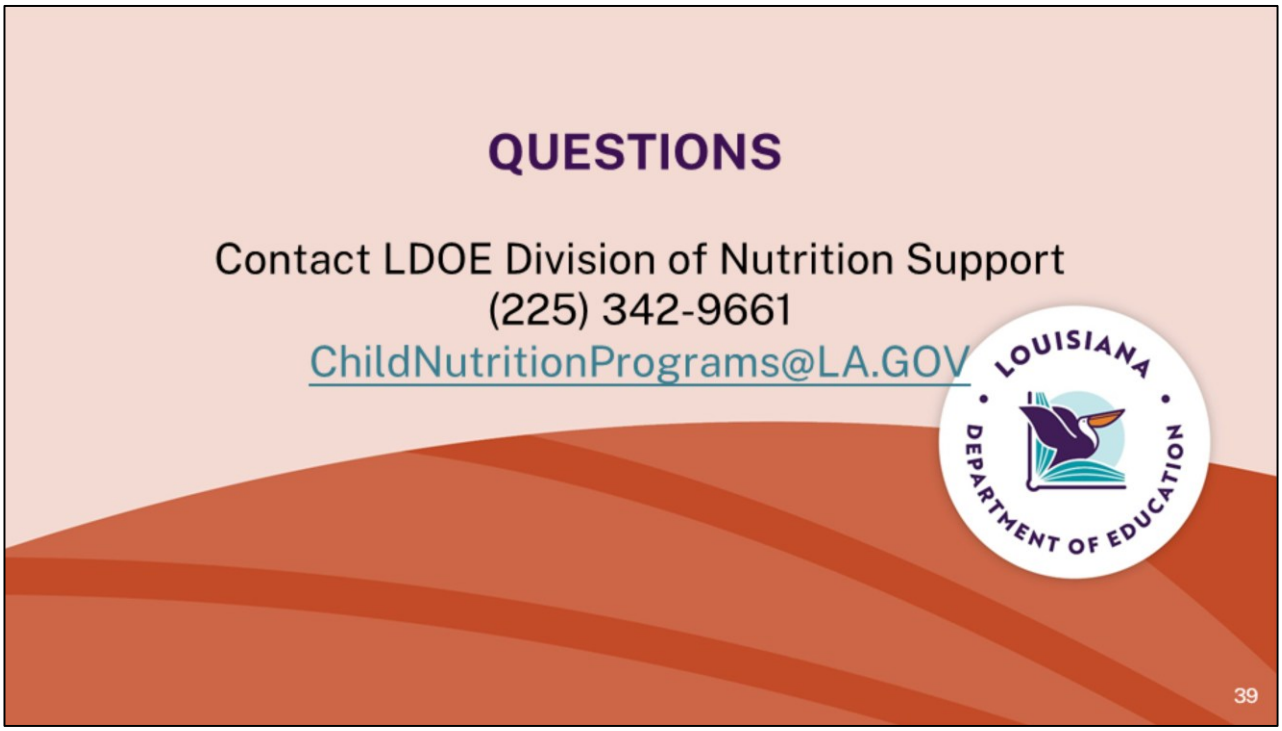
The New Director training will be in person on July 7-8.

Louisiana Tray of the Week



Louisiana Tray of the week will take from August 17, 2026 - May 14, 2027 for the 26-27 SY.
The Louisiana tray of the week campaign is a year long initiative.
Each week the Louisiana Fit Kids team will highlight at least one school meal tray served within the past 1-4 weeks.
Email your tray photos to louisianafitkids@pbrc.edu.
When submitting your meal tray photos:

- The meal should meet the SBP or NSLP meal pattern, clearly showing all components
- Include a short description of the menu items
- Indicate the school where the meal was served
- Provide the date of service
- The food should be attractively plated on the tray
- The tray should be an accurate representation of what your students selected or could select



Contact LDOE Division of Nutrition Support
(225) 342-9661
ChildNutritionPrograms@LA.GOV