



## USDA Child Nutrition Programs

The following are United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services (USDA) programs administered by the Iowa Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)**  
 Provide reimbursement to public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions for nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals to children each school day. Free or reduced-price meals must be provided to those children who qualify for such benefits according to specified household size and income standards.
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**  
 Provides nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income areas during the summer months. Free meals, that meet nutrition guidelines, are provided to all children 18 years old and under at approved SFSP sites.
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**  
 Provides meal reimbursement to child care centers, adult day care centers, emergency shelters, and child development homes for serving nutritious meals.

## Meals During the Pandemic

The SFSP was expanded due to the pandemic through a series of nationwide waivers that are to support access to nutritious meals while minimizing potential exposure to the COVID-19. These include:

- Onsite Monitoring Requirements: [Child Nutrition Response #42](#) and [#43](#)
- Allow SFSP operations through SY 2020-21: [Child Nutrition Response #59](#)
- Area eligibility (COVID-19): [Child Nutrition Response #60](#)
- Non-congregate feeding: [Child Nutrition Response #61](#)
- Parent and Guardian pick-up [Child Nutrition Response #62](#)
- Meal pattern flexibility [Child Nutrition Response #63](#)
- Area eligibility for closed enrolled sites [Child Nutrition Response #64](#)
- First week site visit [Child Nutrition Response #65](#)
- Meal service times [Child Nutrition Response #66](#)
- Offer versus serve [Child Nutrition Response #67](#)

## Reimbursement and Participation

| Reimbursement Rates | Free   | Reduced | Paid   | SFSP*    |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
| Breakfast           | \$1.89 | \$1.59  | \$0.32 | \$2.4625 |
| Lunch               | \$3.58 | \$3.18  | \$0.40 | \$4.3175 |

\*SFSP rates as of January 2021 based on self-preparation sponsors and vended sponsors in rural areas



Despite USDA's nationwide waivers that allow meals to be served through the SFSP in place of the traditional school meal programs, meal participation has decreased as represented in the tables below.

|                       | <b>Total Lunch Meals</b><br>(includes NSLP and SFSP meals) | <b>Total Breakfast Meals</b><br>(includes SBP and SFSP meals) |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| <b>October 2019</b>   | <b>7,816,750</b>   | <b>2,289,745</b>  |
| <b>October 2020</b>   | <b>5,651,142</b>   | <b>2,230,270</b>  |
| <b>Difference (%)</b> | <i>Decrease of 28%</i>                                     | <i>Decrease of 3%</i>   |

|                                | <b>SY 2018-19</b> | <b>SY 2019-20</b> | <b>SY 2020-21 (through Dec 2020)</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>NSLP - Lunch</b>            | 60,218,618        | 44,305,567        | 3,509,622                            |
| <b>SFSP - Lunch*</b>           | 0                 | 5,680,772         | 16,558,073                           |
| <b>Total Lunches Served</b>    | <b>60,218,618</b> | <b>49,986,339</b> | <b>20,067,695**</b>                  |
| <b>SBP - Breakfast</b>         | 16,741,127        | 12,710,120        | 1,096,035                            |
| <b>SFSP - Breakfast*</b>       | 0                 | 5,014,657         | 6,813,578                            |
| <b>Total Breakfasts Served</b> | <b>16,741,127</b> | <b>17,724,777</b> | <b>7,909,613**</b>                   |

\*SFSP counts include participation for March-May 2020 in SY 2019-20 and August-December 2020 in SY 2020-21.

\*\*To date SY2020-21 data is showing a downward trend as compared to SY 2018-19.

## Balancing the Budget

Child Nutrition Programs are to operate as a non-profit by balancing the budget through Federal and State reimbursement, USDA Foods, paid and reduced meal sales, and a la carte sales. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the non-profit food service account in a variety of ways including

- Reduced a la carte revenue;
- Reduced revenue from paid and reduced meals; and
- Increased food and supply costs for pre-packaged food items, "to-go" containers.

## School Meal Programs Helping Families

### Stephanie Hawkins – Fairfield CSD Food Service Director

"With almost 50% free/reduced students in our district, being able to serve these children through the SFSP was our only answer to provide healthy food to them. So many families are struggling during this time. SFSP is not only providing food but we are also providing emotional stability for these children. I have been told over and over again the joy that they get when they receive the food from the school. The food is familiar, it is what once was "normal" for them. One grandma told me that her grandson danced with his pint of milk in his hand when he got it. I am so thankful for the SFSP and the flexibilities that have allowed us to meet the food insecurity and emotional needs in our community."

### Terry Marlow - Glenwood CSD Food Service Director

"The area eligibility waiver got us going and opened up our ability to serve all students in the district. The pre-approved waiver allowed us a quick turnaround, so in March we began serving meals just two days after school was out. The non-congregate meal waiver permitted us to keep kids separated, serving them in classrooms, or having caregivers pick up meals for our offsite, virtual learners. When our superintendent first announced the extended waivers, within two minutes I received my first phone call from a parent that said, 'Now we can make ends meet, we will make it. Thank you!'"