



State of New Jersey

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To: School Business Administrators; Charter School Leads; Non Public School Administrators;
Food Service Directors of Schools Participating in the School Nutrition Programs

From: Arleen Ramos-Szatmary, M.S., Coordinator *Arleen Ramos-Szatmary*
School Nutrition Programs

Date: August 15, 2014

Subject: "Back to School" Information and Reminders

Another new school year is about to begin. We are undergoing many changes to the School Nutrition Programs, as a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Please take a few moments to read the important reminders and updates noted below:

- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)
 - LEAs that have at least one site eligible for CEP have been notified of their eligibility. USDA has extended the deadline to apply from June 30 to August 31, 2014. See the memo posted on June 23, 2014 in SNEARS Messages and Memos screen for more information on CEP.
 - New Guidance and Q & As, as well as an updated CEP Estimator tool have been recently released by USDA and are posted in SNEARS. The CEP Estimator tool compares estimated Federal reimbursement for CEP vs. non-CEP situations and also includes a grouping tool that allows a school district to input groups of schools and see the combined group ISP (Identified Student Percentage).
- Direct Certification (DC) (see memo posted 07/14/2014)
 - Must be conducted three times per year (by schools in the National School Lunch (NLSP) or breakfast (SBP) programs)
 - July 15th- September 1st, 2014
 - October 1st- October 30th, 2014
 - March 1st- March 30th, 2015
 - Must be conducted using a file upload of the entire school/school district database into the SNEARS DC program.
 - This year there are three major enhancements to the system:
 - Probabilistic Match
 - Foster Care Match
 - Duplicate Certified Students Tab (now within the LEA)

- Application Packets for FY 2015
 - Application packets must be submitted and certified by September 30, 2014 in order to participate in the School Nutrition Programs for the 2014-2015 school year, which is effective as of October 1, 2014.
 - The FY 2015 packet is accessed by clicking on the *Program Management* menu tab at the top of the screen in SNEARS.
 - **NOTE:** Any changes effective for September 2014 (user name or contact information changes; program additions/deletions; school information changes) must also be made in the FY 2014 Application Packet, located under the *Current Application Packet* menu tab.
 - **IMPORTANT:** Always keep information updated - especially user names and email addresses, by revising the Schedule A at any time changes need to be made.
- **REMINDER:** After certifying all of the required documents, the final application packet button must be certified in order for state staff to be notified to review and approve the packet. All packet information must be approved by state personnel in order to participate in any of the School Nutrition Programs.
- Seamless Summer Option (SSO)
 - New this Year! LEAs that want to apply for the SSO next summer 2015 must indicate that in the question that will now appear in the SNEARS annual agreement packet renewal, Schedule A summary screen. The Schedule A screen will show the question and a checkbox that can be clicked to indicate that the LEA will be applying for SSO.
- Local Wellness Policies
 - LEAs must amend the local school wellness policy to meet current requirements outlined in the memo released August 1, 2014 currently posted in SNEARS Messages and Memos screen.
- Smart Snacks
 - As of July 1, 2014 federal regulations will take effect in New Jersey in the area of “Smart Snacks” standards. Please refer to the NJ memo posted in SNEARS Resources under NJ Memos on April 16, 2014 for more information.
 - **New Jersey does not allow fundraising exemptions.**
- Farm to School Programs
 - *Jersey Fresh* Farm to School Week is September 22 – 26, 2014. We hope all schools will menu *Jersey Fresh* produce during that week!
 - National Farm to School Month is in October. It is a time to highlight the use of locally grown products in the school lunch programs.
 - *Jersey Fresh* Farm to School Recognition Program allows schools to apply to participate in this promotional program. Schools must purchase and serve Jersey Fresh produce throughout the year as outlined in the participation application.
 - Visit the state and federal websites for resources and information, including a Farm to School Week toolkit located on the state’s site:
 - http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/farm_to_school.html
 - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/default.htm>
- NJDA’s Jets Play 60 Eat Right, Move More program
 - Once again, the NY Jets are partnering with the NJ Department of Agriculture to sponsor the *Eat Right, Move More* program.
 - The application will incorporate the Jets Play 60 Challenge and more monetary grants.
 - This year there is a new process to apply. More details on how to participate in this program will be announced on September 5th in the SNEARS messages/memos screen.

- Verification Summary Report (for schools in the NSLP or SBP)
 - The initial portion of the verification summary report to determine the number of applications to be verified must be submitted in SNEARS beginning October 1st. The rest of the verification summary must be completed in SNEARS between October 31, 2014 and November 30, 2014. Verification trainings and a webinar have been scheduled (see memo posted in August 2014 on SNEARS).

- Food Safety Inspection Report (for schools in NSLP or SBP)
 - LEAs will be required to report the number of health/sanitation inspections each school/site had during the 2013 – 2014 school year. The report must be submitted in SNEARS from October 1 through October 31.

- National School Lunch Week, October 13 – 17, 2014
 - The theme this year is “Get in the Game with School Lunch”. The theme encourages kids to find a balance between healthy eating and physical activity.
 - Information, tools and resources are available by clicking on the Resource Center tab, Promoting your program *NSLW 2014* link on the School Nutrition Association website at www.schoolnutrition.org

Thank you for all you do to provide nutritious, low cost meals to the children in our state!