

Monthly Update

School Nutrition Programs



November 5, 2025

Distributed to the School Nutrition Program Authorized Representatives Listserv and the Food Service Directors Listserv and posted at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, SNP, SNP Monthly Updates

Important Updates, Reminders, & Deadlines

State Holiday – November 11

The KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness office will be closed on Tuesday, November 11 in observance of Veterans Day. KSDE offices will also be closed on November 27 and 28 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

November Town Hall – Canceled

The town hall meeting scheduled for November 13 will not be held. The next town hall meeting will be on December 11 from 2-3 pm.

November Payment Dates

Child Nutrition Program (CNP) vouchers, including School Nutrition Program (SNP) and Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP) vouchers, are posted between 8 and 9:30 am on Tuesdays. This allows direct deposit payment on Fridays; posting of vouchers is a four-business day process before Sponsors receive the payment via ACH, and physical checks are mailed out on Thursdays. CNP vouchers, including SNP and FFVP, will only be posted on Tuesday, 11/4 and 11/18 this month. Sponsor Claims in “Approved” status by 8 am each applicable morning will get paid in the month of November.

60-day deadlines are outlined on a new resource titled “Claim Deadlines – Program Year 2026” available at <https://cnw.ksde.gov/snp/food-service-facts/chapters/chapter-11-claiming-reimbursement>. Should you have any questions regarding payments for CNPs, please contact [Dessa Gifford](#), Public Service Administrator, either by email or calling (785) 296-4965.

Electronic Payments

The Kansas Secretary of Administration has notified KSDE that all sponsors who receive \$50,000 or more or 10 payments or more annually from KSDE **must** be paid via electronic deposit. Child Nutrition & Wellness will be reaching out to those sponsors who meet these criteria and currently receive their reimbursement via a paper check.

Maximizing Access to Child Nutrition Programs

During a special town hall meeting held on October 30, Child Nutrition & Wellness staff discussed how sponsors can maximize participation and access to child nutrition programs. With the federal government shutdown, November SNAP (Food Assistance) benefits will be delayed. What sponsors can do to support families:

1. Maximize school meals and reduce food waste by encouraging participation in school breakfast, lunch, and snack programs. Social media can be an effective way to spread the word about access to school breakfast and lunch!
2. Be sure students have adequate time to eat breakfast and lunch at school.
3. Utilize share tables to provide extra food/milk for students that want/need it. Share tables are stations/carts where students can place unopened food/milk and can be in place during breakfast and lunch meal service. Food/milk from the share table must be consumed at school.



4. Consider innovative breakfast options to maximize breakfast participation: Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go in hallways and cafeterias, Second Chance Breakfast after homeroom or first period.
5. If your school qualifies, consider participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals. These meals and snacks can be served to children located in low-income locations. Schools interested in being reimbursed for a supper and/or snack served after the school day and on weekends are encouraged to reach out to Laura Hodgson at laura.hodgson@ksde.gov or Emily Bonilla at emily.bonilla@ksde.gov or call the Child Nutrition & Wellness office at (785) 296-2276. More information is available in [Chapter 13: At-Risk Afterschool Meals](#). All meals and snacks must be consumed onsite.

Please reach out to Child Nutrition & Wellness at (785) 296-2276 with any questions or for additional information regarding how to maximize access to child nutrition programs.

Verification – Important Upcoming Deadlines

- October 31 – Enter the number of students approved for reduced price and free meals in each category on the Pre-Verification Worksheet in KN-CLAIM. Do NOT update number of applications.
 - CEP sponsors only: Enter the number of students directly certified for Food Assistance (FA) as of 10/31/2025 for CEP sites and non-CEP sites. This total should be the same as row 1a. If sponsor is 100% CEP, put a zero for non-CEP sites.
- November 15 – Complete all verification activities. This deadline is the same whether it falls on a weekday or weekend.
- December 15 – Complete reporting of Post-Verification Results in KN-CLAIM.

To navigate to the Verification screens in KN-CLAIM, select School Nutrition Programs, Program Year 2026, then click on the “Forms” tab on the Sponsor Summary page. For step-by-step instructions, the Verification Quick Reference Guide is available in KN-CLAIM under PY 2026, Quick References, View SNP References, Verification. Verification guidance and all related forms (including KSDE’s Spanish translations) are available at <https://cnw.ksde.gov> under SNP, Food Service Facts, Chapter 8: Verification of Eligibility.

USDA requires KSDE to annually report verification data for each sponsor. The USDA report is completed using the data you provide on the Pre-Verification Worksheet and the Post-Verification Results screens in KN-CLAIM. Please make sure that the information entered is accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Verification Validation Service Available

The Post Verification Results page includes a data validation service. This allows users to check their data for any potential errors before the data is sent to USDA. Note: The October Claim must be filed before this service is available.

- Step 1: Once the correct number of applications has been entered on the Post-Verification Results page in KN-CLAIM, a blue “Check Data” button will display. Click the “Check Data” button.
- Step 2: The results of the data check will be compiled into a Validation Report. Click “View Validation Report” to review possible errors associated with the verification data.
- Step 3: Contact your Child Nutrition Consultant for assistance in resolving any data errors discovered during the data validation process.



Online Verification Trainings Available

Training covering the steps required to complete verification within all established deadlines was held in early September. The recording of SNP Verification is now available on the KSDE Training Portal at <https://learning.ksde.org> under K12 Staff, Child Nutrition & Wellness: SNP. Pre-Verification Worksheet (20 min) and Post-Verification Worksheet (10 min) tutorials are also available on the KSDE Training Portal at <https://learning.ksde.org> under K12 Staff, Child Nutrition & Wellness: Tutorials, SNP Tutorials.

Annual On-Site Accountability Reviews – Complete by February 1

Sponsors with more than one serving site must complete on-site accountability reviews by February 1. The reviews must be completed at all sites approved to participate in the National School Lunch Program and 50% of sites approved to participate in the School Breakfast Program. It is a best practice to rotate review of breakfast sites to ensure all sites are monitored at least every other year. The School Food Service On-Site Accountability Review (Form 9-G) can be accessed at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, SNP, SNP Food Service Facts, Chapter 9. A tutorial demonstrating how to complete annual on-site monitoring is available on the KSDE Training Portal under K12 Staff > Child Nutrition & Wellness: Tutorials > SNP Tutorials > Developing Counting and Claiming Policies and Procedures (45 min).

The purpose of the on-site review is to ensure the accountability system (as reported on the site application) is being used correctly and yields an accurate number of reimbursable free, reduced price, and paid meals. Someone who is not involved with the daily operation of the system must complete the review. If the review discloses problems with a school's meal counting or claiming procedures, corrective action must be implemented by the sponsor. A follow-up review must be conducted within 45 calendar days following the first review to determine that the corrective action resolved the problems. Keep completed reviews on file with other food service records for review or audit.

FSMC Fall Monitoring & Advisory Committee Reminder

Sponsors contracting with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) must also monitor the operation of the FSMC by conducting on-site visits and completing the *Kansas Food Service Management Company (CONTRACTOR) Monitoring Form, Form 14-A*, for each site. This review ensures the FSMC is following the terms of the contract and any other applicable Federal, State, and local rules and regulations. The monitoring form is to be completed for each food service site at least two (2) times per school year. Sponsors are to maintain documentation of monitoring and any corrective action taken.

The Food Service Advisory Committee is also required to meet twice a year and be documented with notes or minutes. Ideally the committee consists of parents, students, and staff. Many sponsors use their Site Council, Student Council, or Wellness Committee and add an agenda item for food service discussion. The committee may discuss menus (liked and disliked menu items), service (friendly and helpful staff), is food served hot, is food served on time, are there any taste tests, is there enough time to eat, are lines reasonable, etc.

Timeline for Completing Monitoring Reviews & Advisory Committee Meetings

- August through December: Complete the first Monitoring Review for each food service site. Conduct the first Food Service Advisory Committee meeting. **Keep documentation on file.**
- January through April: Complete the second Monitoring Review for each food service site. Conduct the second Food Service Advisory Committee meeting. **Keep documentation on file.**



Submitting Monitoring Reviews and FSMC Advisory Board minutes

- Copies of all completed and **signed** Kansas FSMC Monitoring Form(s) (Form 14-A) along with FSMC Advisory Committee minutes from each semester must be submitted with the annual FSMC Renewal Addendum each spring. Sponsors that are procuring a new FSMC contract will also submit their completed and **signed** Kansas FSMC Monitoring Form(s) (Form 14-A) along with FSMC Advisory Committee minutes to KSDE each spring.

Professional Development & Training

Training Opportunities

Many opportunities for learning are available to SNP sponsors. Go to <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, Training, CNW Calendar to access the schedule of live classes with dates, times, and links. Upcoming live virtual trainings include:

- **Is Your Attitude Showing?** on November 5 from 2-3 pm
- **Food Safety Basics** on November 19 from 2-5 pm
- **Managing Responses to Stressful Events** on December 3 from 2-3 pm
- *Note: Food Safety Basics will not be held in December*

On-demand training is offered 24/7 on the KSDE Training Portal. Create an account at <https://learning.ksde.org>. For detailed instructions on creating an account, go to <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, Training. New to the portal:

- **Frequent Food Safety Violations in Spanish** (1 hour) – under General Classes
- **Speed Scratch Strategies** (1.5 hours) - under General Classes
- **Procuring Local Foods** (1 hour) - under Procurement
- **Meal Modification Documentation** (30 min) – under General Information Tutorials
- **Vegetable Subgroups** (25 min) – under SNP Tutorials

If you would like to schedule an in-service, culinary coach session, or have questions about professional development, contact Holly Steinlage at holly.steinlage@ksde.gov.

Culinary Coaches – NEW Training Program!

This training opportunity allows sponsors to request in-person, hands-on culinary training conducted at their site. Sponsors can choose from five training topics: Critical Culinary Skills, Knife Basics, Cooking Basics, and Baking Basics: Quick Breads or Yeast Breads. The sessions will be led by trained culinary coaches and will focus on developing culinary skills that will better enable child nutrition program sponsors to prepare scratch and speed scratch recipes. If interested in scheduling a culinary coach session, please contact Holly Steinlage at holly.steinlage@ksde.gov.

Save the Date! Jump Start for New Directors – February 24 & 25

A two-day training opportunity for new directors (authorized representatives and/or food service directors) will be held in Hays on February 24-25, 2026. This orientation training is designed to give an overview of program responsibilities to new directors with less than three years of experience. Participants will receive valuable tips, guidance, and ideas from KSDE child nutrition consultants while also meeting other new directors. For more information or to register, contact Holly Steinlage at holly.steinlage@ksde.gov.



New Resources

Farm to Plate in Our State Newsletter is Back!

The Kansas Farm to Plate in Our State Newsletter took a hiatus while we focused on other projects. The newsletter will resume November 2025 sharing the latest Farm to Plate updates. The newsletter will be sent monthly. If you would like to receive the newsletter, please email Eryn Davis at eryn.davis@ksde.gov.

Earn a FREE Culinary Kit for Your School Kitchen!

Does your kitchen need a new digital scale or blender? Participate in the Local Foods Culinary Training on the KSDE Training Portal and earn a free culinary kit for your school kitchen! **Each school kitchen with a staff member completing the training is eligible to receive a culinary toolkit consisting of a dough cutter, wire whisk, digital scale, and blender (1 kit per school kitchen), while supplies last.** Instructions for completing the survey to receive the toolkit are posted at the end of the online training. This 2-hour training features Kansas products and producers, gives helpful information on how to implement Farm to Plate in Kansas Child Nutrition Programs, and provides recipes and culinary tips for incorporating the Kansas products featured in the training into local menus. Go to <https://learning.ksde.org>, K12 Staff, Child Nutrition & Wellness: General Classes, Local Foods Culinary Training (2 Hours), to access the training.

You are Appreciated!

The KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness team appreciates each of you and your work to create healthy habits for a lifetime through the SNP. **Be sure to share your best practices by using the hashtag #FuelingKSKids!** Not on social media? Don't hesitate to email pictures of the great meals and activities being offered in your programs to anyone on the Child Nutrition & Wellness team!

As a small token of our appreciation, CNW is shipping a banner to all School Nutrition Program operators. Please be on the lookout.

As always, if you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact your child nutrition consultant or the Topeka office.

The CNW Team



For more information, contact:

Kelly Chanay
Director, Child Nutrition & Wellness
(785) 296-2276
<https://cnw.ksde.gov>
kelly.chanay@ksde.gov

Kansas State Department of Education
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212
(785) 296-3201
www.ksde.gov

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