

USDA Child Nutrition Programs Administrative Review Summary Report

School Food Authority: Germantown School District

Agency Code: 66-2058

School(s) Reviewed: Germantown Middle School & County Line Elementary School

Review Date(s): 2/7-10//2017

Date of Exit Conference: 2/10/17

State agencies (SA) are required to conduct administrative reviews to assess School Food Authority (SFA)'s administration of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other school nutrition programs. The objectives of the Administrative Reviews (AR) are to:

- Determine whether the SFA meets program regulations,
- Provide technical assistance,
- Secure needed corrective action,
- Assess fiscal action, and when applicable, recover improperly paid funds.

General Program Reminders/Updates:

- The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Nutrition Team (SNT) conducts School Nutrition Skills Development Courses (SNSDC) each summer in various locations around the state at no charge. Courses cover many areas of the school nutrition programs including administrative responsibilities, program basics, meal pattern requirements and menu planning, financial management, professional standards, procurement, and many other topics. More information along with other upcoming trainings and webinars can be found on the Wisconsin DPI School Nutrition Training webpage dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/training.
- SFA staff are encouraged to pursue GOALS Certification. GOALS stands for Goal Oriented Achievement Learning Skills. This is a certificate endorsed by the DPI and is obtained by completing training in nutrition, program administration and operations, and communications and marketing. For more information go to the Wisconsin DPI School Nutrition Training webpage dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/training/goal-oriented-achievement-learning-skills.

District Appreciation/Commendations/Noteworthy Initiatives:

Special thanks is extended to the following staff positions at the Germantown School District: Food Service Director; Food Service Secretaries; Lead/Servers at the Middle School; and Lead/Servers at the County Line Elementary School. In addition thanks to the Business office staff for the courtesies extended to us for their time in completing the comprehensive financial review. We were especially appreciative of all the time spent to answer questions off site and for cooperatively pulling many records/documentation needed for the on-site review. Staff were very receptive to recommendations and guidance. The Food Service Director and Secretaries in particular did a very thorough job of answering the many questions on the USDA *Off-Site Assessment Tool*. The answers were easily validated during the on-site review.

REVIEW AREAS

1. MEAL ACCESS AND REIMBURSEMENT

Commendations

- Good documentation in terms of receipt date of the meal application. Applications were date stamped when received and processed in a timely manner.
- Good efforts to follow up with households reporting *annual income* to see if the income meets the criteria of seasonal or fluctuating and would qualify to be reported annually. Only those households with fluctuating income, e.g. seasonal workers or self-employed should report annual income. All others persons report *current income*, i.e. weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.
- Nice to see notes made on the applications when it was necessary to clarify income or other information on the application.
- Good job to notify households that had not reapplied for meal benefits (or been directly certified) that the household benefits would be expiring.
- Determining official did a good job to ensure software uploads for those students that were directly certified was correctly completed.
- Good job completing direct certification at the required timeframes and then some. Direct certification gives eligible households with *automatic* free meal eligibility.

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Certification and Benefit Issuance

- A contact should always be made to confirm hh size and to DOCUMENT the contact if the number of people listed on the application differs with the total listed in Step 3 – G. of the free and reduced price meal application. This is also particularly important when the income reported on the application is *annual*. Households should only report annual income if the income meets the criteria of *seasonal or fluctuating*. The household can either project its annual rate of income, to report as current income. However, if the prior year's income provides an accurate reflection of the household's current annual rate of income, the prior year may be used as a basis to project the annual rate of income.
- We also discussed the need to document when an *extension of direct certification benefits* has been occurred. The documentation includes who is extending the benefit.
- In the case of an *extension* of benefits, the student that is extended the benefits is also considered to be *directly certified*. This can affect the sample size for *verification* since students that are directly certified are not part of sample pool for verification.
- Applications with a case number should be accepted at *face value* provided the case number contains the required number of digits (10). However, the USDA *Eligibility Manual for School Meals – EM*, (School Year 2016-17), <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/eligibility-manual-2016.pdf>, encourages schools to review the direct certification list to determine whether any of the applications with case numbers can be matched with children on the list. If no match is found, the LEA (Local Educational Agency) should contact the household for further clarification. If the LEA still consider the application to be questionable, the determining official should *verify the application for cause*. Remember, verification for cause can be completed anytime during the school year.

- When determining meal eligibility, income should only be *annualized* if there are multiple sources of income with different frequency listed on the application. As needed remind software companies of this rule.
- Effective July 1, 2019 regulations will require schools to provide up to *10 calendar days* of free meals to students who transfer from a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school to a non-Provision school in a different school/district. Earlier implementation is encouraged if possible. Acceptable documentation of eligibility from the former Provision CEP can be a copy of the most current Wisconsin Schools and Districts Participating in Community Eligibility Provision list highlighting the former school's name. The list is updated annually and available on the DPI CEP website, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/cep-participating-schools-and-districts-1617.pdf>.

Findings and Corrective Action Needed

Finding: A statistical sample was conducted to determine the number of meal applications for this AR. *Two hundred Ninety Five* names on the benefit issuance list were checked via review of meal applications or direct certification information. There were only *two meal application errors* found. Excellent efforts were made by the Determining Official to correctly approve the applications and extend meal benefits for those students that were directly certified.

The errors are summarized on the SFA-1 review form. A copy was left with the district during the review. The application error for students coded BA FR and BA TH was due to an inadvertent keying error that resulted in an incorrect determination of free meals. Based on the income reported, the household is eligible for reduced price meal benefits.

The second error (students coded BU CO and BU GA) also inadvertent, occurred when a payer name change caused the *carryover status* to update to the current school year, but the household has not reapplied by submitting a new meal application for the current school year, and is not eligible via direct certification.

Corrective Action Needed: Each household should be notified of the errors by telephone if possible, and followed up with a letter which formally explains the change in meal benefits for the first error, and the second household given a meal application to complete. The households should be extended the required 10-calendar day timeframe to appeal the change in status for their children and/or make submit the required meal application in the case of the second error. Letters were sent to both households on February 8 and appropriate time given to appeal. THANKS for the prompt action taken to address these errors.

For additional corrective action please provide a screen shot and/or meal history for each child noted above to show that the change in meal benefits has occurred.

Fiscal action is determined for all *critical review* areas which pertains to certification AND benefit issuance errors. USDA has established a \$600 forgiveness before fiscal action is assessed. The results of the fiscal action will be indicated in the review closure report.

Verification

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Three applications were correctly selected as required per the verification process used- Alternate 1, Random sample.

- The confirmation review was conducted as required, but it was clarified that the confirming official is only required to check meal applications selected for verification prior to sending the letter to the households selected for verification. There is no need to double check the information provided by the households selected for the process.
- It was suggested that the district use DPIs *Tracker Form* which documents the verification process. Using the form makes it easy for the reviewer to follow the process thru from start to finish, i.e. selection; confirmation reviews; date letters of selection for verification were sent; follow-up attempts; review of the income documentation on file; and letters sent to households regarding results of verification. The form also facilitates completion of the required *Verification Collection Report (VCR)*. Thanks for completing the VCR well in advance of the February 1 due date and correctly completed.
- Recommend beginning the verification process a little sooner to allow time for any required follow up attempts and to send letters summarizing results of verification to the households. Per regulations, the verification process should be completed by November 15. LEAs have until February 1 each year to submit the verification collection report.

Meal Counting and Claiming

Finding: Review of the meal count information for the review period, December 2016 found some small claiming errors in the *paid meal* category for lunch program only. The district used the reports from the software – *District Monthly Participation Data Report and Monthly Activity Reports* instead of the individual school **Accuclaim** reports when the counts are consolidated for the monthly reimbursement claim.

Corrective Action Needed: All School Food Authorities (SFAs) are required to complete a monthly *edit check*. The edit check compares daily meal counts against eligible free, reduced and paid times an attendance factor to ensure more meals are not claimed than allowed. For your software the edit check report is called Accuclaim as noted above. The Accuclaim reports are completed for each school.

For corrective action we discussed having the district look at a *detail* count report to see if there is a student that is possibly coded to the wrong eligibility category or an incorrect entity. **All reports** within the software should match, so if the reason for the error cannot be determined then at the time future reimbursement claims are prepared the claim preparer should only use the Accuclaim reports.

For corrective action please provide written detail if you were able to determine the cause of the claiming discrepancies for December. If not, then detail in writing your understanding that for all future reimbursement claims the Accuclaim reports will be used as a basis for claiming. Also submit a copy of the January (software) meal count reports, Accuclaim reports and enrollment/attendance reports used for this reporting period.

Since meal counting is considered a *critical review* area it is subject to fiscal action for the incorrect claiming periods from the start of the school year thru the review period. Again, the \$600 forgiveness applies, but will be added to the meal applications noted in the first section of the AR report. The district will be advised in the review closure report if fiscal action will be required.

2. MEAL PATTERN AND NUTRITIONAL QUALITY

Commendations

Sincere thanks to the Director of Food and Nutrition, the Administrative Assistants of the Food and Nutrition Department, and the school nutrition professionals at County Line Elementary School and Kennedy Middle School. We appreciate your time and efforts spent preparing for and participating in the onsite review. The Director of Food and Nutrition is highly knowledgeable, inquisitive, and organized. The garden bar cycle menu is a great idea! The garden bars looked fresh and colorful. We also liked the wrap, cut in half and displayed on the serving line at the middle school. The kitchens were impeccably clean, and staff consistently follow food safety best practices. Special recognition and thanks to the lead at Kennedy Middle School, who demonstrated exceptional knowledge of program requirements. She reviews production records with staff daily, helping them identify menu items, understand meal components, and properly implement Offer versus Serve. You were all a pleasure to work with!

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Weight versus Volume

Use cup volume amounts when recording portion sizes on the production records for fruits and vegetables. This will be the easiest way to make sure the meal pattern is being met. For meat/meat alternate and grain items crediting information should be recorded in ounce equivalents. Please ensure weight and volume are not being used interchangeably for crediting purposes. A portion control webcast, which describes portion control techniques and explains the difference between weight and volume, is available from the School Nutrition Team at <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/training/webcasts#pc>. Earn fifteen minutes of continuing education credit by viewing the webcast.

Offer versus Serve

Under OVS at lunch, a student must take at least three components in the required quantities. One selection must be at least 1/2 cup (total) from either the fruits or vegetables component. Depending on the planned menu, the student may need to select more than one food item to have the minimum quantity needed for a component to be credited.

Five non-reimbursable meals were identified during lunch meal observation at County Line Elementary School on Wednesday, February 8. Four of the five meals included a tri-taters. These hash brown potatoes weigh one ounce each per the manufacturer, and a serving of two tri-taters credits as 1/8 cup based on the Food Buying Guide. When a student selected the tri-taters alone or in combination with one 1/4 cup portion of vegetables from the garden bar, his or her meal fell short of the 1/2 cup fruit and/or vegetable quantity requirement.

If only three components are selected, and two of these are fruit and vegetable, the student may only select the 1/2 cup portion for the fruit OR vegetable. For the other two components, the student must

select at least the minimum daily required serving of the components for them to be counted. Three food components are required for an adequate nutritious meal for students and to warrant the Federal reimbursement. Within each component, different food items may be offered, giving students many combinations for building a reimbursable meal. Other than selecting the required minimum ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable serving, it is the student’s choice to select or decline a food component.

We strongly encourage you and your elementary-level food service staff to review the Offer Versus Serve Guidance Manual, available on our webpage at <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/offer-versus-serve-guidance-manual.pdf>.

Signage

Signage helps students understand what components make up a reimbursable meal. Please add a statement to your current signage that states the student must take at least ½ **cup** fruit, vegetable, or fruit/vegetable combination.

Production Records and Crediting Documentation

Crediting information recorded on the production records was not consistently in agreement with crediting information on the supporting documentation, such as child nutrition (CN) labels, product formulation statements, the Food Buying Guide, or standardized recipes. Including meal pattern contributions for specified grade groups on production records is not required, though it must be documented and available for staff. Food manufacturers periodically reformulate products used in schools. It is important to stay current with these changes and be confident that the documentation on file matches the products in stock. Records should be reviewed and updated at least annually and as new products are purchased or substituted. Please ensure crediting information, whether recorded on production records or separately, is accurate and in agreement with supporting documentation. Additionally, product formulation statements must clearly detail the ingredients and their creditable quantities in order to be served in Child Nutrition Programs.

Corrective Action Needed

Meal Pattern Finding #1: Weekly minimum requirement for the grain component was not met for the 6-8 age/grade group as a result of a one ounce equivalent menu item offered several days per week at Kennedy Middle School.

Required Corrective Action: Please submit a statement describing how you will alter the menu to meet the weekly minimum requirements going forward.

Meal Pattern Finding #2: Minimum daily requirement for fruit was not met on Friday, December 9, at Kennedy Middle School. The shortage resulted from substitution of a clementine for a banana, which credit as 3/8 cup and 1/2 cup of fruit, respectively. The minimum daily requirement for fruit for the 6-8 age/grade group is 1/2 cup.

Required Corrective Action: Please submit a statement describing how you will meet the minimum daily requirements going forward.

NOTE: For the meal pattern findings #1 and #2 above, these are considered “planned quantity shortages.” For this first Administrative Review cycles are not subject to fiscal action. However, *repeat violations* will be subject to fiscal action (\$600 forgiveness applies for each program) at the time of the next AR.

Meal Pattern Finding #3: The required 1/2 cup fruit, vegetable, or fruit vegetable combination statement is missing from posted signage at Kennedy Middle School.

Required Corrective Action: Add a statement to your current signage that states the student must take at least 1/2 cup fruit, vegetable, or fruit/vegetable combination. Submit a photo of updated signage. **No further action is required.**

Meal Pattern Finding #4: Five non-reimbursable meals were identified during lunch meal observation at County Line Elementary School on Wednesday, February 8.

Required Corrective Action: Please select corrective action step A or B, in addition to completing corrective action steps C and D:

- A. Increase the serving size of the tri-taters from two pieces to three pieces. Three tri-taters credit at 1/4 cup of vegetable. In combination with a 1/4 cup selection from the garden bar, the 1/2 cup fruit and/or vegetable quantity requirement for reimbursable meals will be satisfied.
- B. Count the tri-taters as an extra. They will contribute to the dietary specifications but will not credit toward the meal pattern.
- C. Update production records to reflect accurate crediting of the tri-taters. Current production records indicate 2 ounces (two 1 ounce pieces) credit as 1/4 cup. Based on the Food Buying Guide, 2 ounces credit as 1/8 cup.
- D. Review crediting documentation types (Child Nutrition (CN) labels, product formulation statements (PFS), Food Buying Guide, etc.) with staff. Explain the relationship between portion size and crediting, and ensure staff are following planned portion sizes listed on production records.

Submit a statement describing how you will address your chosen corrective action step, A or B. Please also send a production record which reflects the updated portion size or counts the tri-taters as an extra. Submit a summary of training to address corrective action step D, included any training materials utilized.

NOTE: Because these five meals are non-reimbursable they are subject to fiscal action. The dollar amount of these five meals will be added to the other two review areas noted in previous sections of this AR report which require fiscal action. The \$600 forgiveness applies. You will be advised in the review closure report if fiscal action will be assessed.

3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

- REMINDER: SFAs are required to have a *local meal charge policy* in place no later than July 1, 2017. More information, resources and best practices may be found on the School Nutrition Team <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/financial>, scroll down to the unpaid meal charges section. For a more comprehensive overview, see SP 58-2016: *Unpaid Meal Charges Guidance*: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/sp-58-2016.pdf>
 - Best Practices
 - Local meal charge policy checklist

- Sample outstanding balance letter
- Sample robo-call script

The district does not *currently* have a *formal unpaid meal charge policy* but is aware of the requirements and has plans to begin work on the policy. The district does however have some good language on the back to school document sent out from Food and Nutrition Department - *Policies and Procedures*. The current policy is enforced and this was observed during the onsite reviews. Cashier staff did a nice job to discreetly address low meal balance with students at the middle school.

Additional language that should be included at least internally regarding debt collection and handling of bad debts. The policy should also have language for refunds. Per regulation, refunds must be made for students that receive *Reduced Price* meal benefits when the student withdraws or leaves (graduates) the district. For students in the paid meal category the district has discretion to determine if refunds will be made and at what dollar amount. Refer to page 32 in the Unpaid Meal Charge Guidance referenced above.

Please remove the reference in the above district policy and procedures about hand stamping elementary students each day the balance in the household account is \$5 or lower. This is a discouraged practice, and has been discontinued effective for the 2016-17 SY.

USDA has established four areas for compliance in the *Resource Management* area. A series of questions related to: Maintenance of the Nonprofit School Food Service Account, Paid Lunch Equity, Revenue from Nonprogram Foods, and Indirect Costs was sent to the SFA at least 4 weeks prior to the AR. Based on the answers the school triggered what is called a *Comprehensive Review*. For the district a comprehensive review was conducted in two areas: *Maintenance of the Nonprofit School Food Service Account* and in the *Revenue from Nonprogram Foods* area.

During the onsite Resource Management portion of the AR the *Paid Lunch Equity* (PLE) tool was discussed, including the current waiver that the district has from increasing paid student meal prices related to keeping the food service program fund balance within the allowable limits (i.e. 3 months' average expenses). The tool for the 2017-18 SY will be posted to the website soon. If a price increase is required by the PLE tool, please be sure to request the waiver again, as this must be done annually. Feel free to contact DPI if you need assistance running the PLE tool or would like to discuss the PLE Exemption Request/process, <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/forms/doc/f1478.doc>.

Maintenance of Nonprofit School Food Service Account

This area was triggered for a *comprehensive review* since the food service account fund balance exceeds three months' average operating expenses for the fiscal year 2015-16. The district will receive a letter soon from DPI to indicate the excess balance and will require a plan for spending down the balance to an allowable amount. Some large equipment purchases have been made this school year which should help to bring the balance down, hopefully to the allowable amount. Please continue to monitor the fund balance each year.

The district also triggered for a comprehensive review prior to the onsite review based on what was thought to be *unallowable* charges for teacher supervision in the cafeterias. Discussion during the onsite AR revealed that there is in fact a basis for the teacher supervisory charge. The time spent is above and beyond the teacher contract, and the teachers complete a paper time card for the time spent

working directly with the food service program. Be sure to keep this documentation on file to support these labor charges since this staff is cross-agency. **Record Retention** for the Federal Nutrition Programs is three years plus the current year of operation.

It was also thought that aide time was charged to the food service account prior to the onsite review. This was found NOT to be the case. Aide labor time is a *district, Fund 10 expense*.

Revenue from Nonprogram Foods

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 established requirements regarding revenue from the sale of nonprogram (NP) foods (formerly referred to as *ala carte*). All revenue from the sale of NP foods must accrue to the nonprofit food service account, and revenue available to support the production of reimbursable school meals cannot subsidize the sale of nonprogram foods.

Nonprogram foods include any non-reimbursable foods and beverages purchased using funds from the nonprofit school food service account, such as adult meals, food sold outside of school hours, or any food used for catering or vending activities. For the Germantown School District nonprogram foods/beverages include: adult meals, catering, non-program food/beverage sales during the meal programs and sales of meals to another school under a Joint Agreement (St. Boniface School).

Compliance for all nonprogram food/beverages is determined if the percent of total revenue generated from nonprogram food sales is equal to or greater than the percent of total food costs for nonprogram foods. USDA allows schools to use a simplified approach to determine compliance, by selecting a reference period (5 consecutive days). SFAs will separate nonprogram food costs from their program food costs for the 5 day reference period. DPI has created a tool to assist schools in meeting this requirement, <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/xls/non-program-food-price-calculator.xlsx>. The DPI tool can also assist SFAs in pricing nonprogram foods and calculating total nonprogram food expenses and revenues and total program expenses and revenues for the designated reference period. This data then pulls into the USDA *Nonprogram Food Revenue Tool* comparing revenue and food cost ratios to measure compliance.

The tool has been completed by the district and showed that costs for nonprogram foods are being covered. In the future be sure to separate adult meals into breakfast and lunch since there are two different meal prices and costs. Also include the cost and revenues for meals sold to your joint agreement school.

Reminder: schools must complete the **USDA or DPI** tool *annually*, similar to the PLE tool.

#1- The revenue tool and a sampling of journal entries and invoices showed that most revenues and expenses are being appropriately charged to the nonprogram food account. Invoices are coded as *Nonprogram Foods*. It might be easiest to determine the average food cost of *all extra entrees (breakfast and lunch)* sold and multiply that by the total number of extra entrées sold (obtained from the daily activity sales reports) at the end of the school year. This will capture all entrée sales. The accountant can then make an adjusting or journal entry to move the food costs from the lunch or breakfast meal programs to the nonprogram foods when completing the food service program annual financial report. The same recommendation is made for any “catered meals”, e.g.

back to school staff breakfast. Both the revenue and food expense must be recorded as a nonprogram food on the financial report.

#2- We discussed for the annual food service program financial report that **Student Meal Account Payments (Paid and Reduced-Price)** are only considered revenues when the meal is “sold”. Refer to the DPI instructions for completing the annual food service program financial report, <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/doc/annual-financial-report-instructions-new-1617.doc>.

#3- Be reminded that the **revenue and expense** for all non-reimbursable adult meals will be reported on the *NEW* Food Service Program financial report (referred to above under Nonprofit School Food Service Account) as a nonprogram food and revenue. Schools no longer report the number of nonreimbursable meals on the monthly reimbursement claim.

4. GENERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

Civil Rights

Commendations

Access to free and reduced price meal eligibility is limited to food service director and the food service secretary (Determining Official). Other than an obscure code (* or %) at the top of the computer screen the cashiers do not have a list of free and reduced students. The code is used at the secondary schools for allowing reimbursable meal access (free student), but limiting ala carte purchases when there is no money in the account.

Good efforts overall to protect the confidentiality of eligible students!

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Special Dietary Needs

#1- Information regarding food allergies and disabilities including the student allergy and disability form is posted to the district’s website. Some of the language is not consistent with changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how it affects the school nutrition programs.

Until recently regulations only *required* schools to make meal accommodations if a licensed medical professional provided documentation to establish that the student has a *disability*. Recent passage of the ADA Amendments Act, considers most physical and mental impairments to constitute a disability. So rather than focus on whether or not the student has a disability, schools should now focus on ensuring equal opportunity to participate in the meal programs. Refer to this USDA policy memo, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/policy-memorandum-modifications-accommodate-disabilities-school-meal-programs>.

If accommodations are made without out medical statement, the student must be offered all meal pattern components and select at least three (this includes selection of at least ½ cup fruit or vegetable) per your offer versus serve policy.

DPI has updated the *Dietary Request* form to meet modified requirements regarding accommodations for students with special dietary needs since medical authorities no longer need to check a box to indicate if the child’s medical condition is a “disability.” The form will still require the medical authority to indicate the following: types of foods to be avoided, a list of foods to be substituted; and require a description of the modifications needed to accommodate the child’s needs. If the form is completed by a medical authority the school will be required to meet the student’s dietary needs/meal accommodations. The district should replace the form that is currently posted to your website or modify your form.

We recommend that the district compare your current policy that addresses accommodating dietary requests (8500) to the USDA guidance and the newly created DPI Q/A. Please update the language in the policy referenced above to be consistent with these changes. The form and Q/A can be found on the website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/medical-statement.pdf>, and <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/q-and-a-sp-59-2016.pdf>.

#2- It was observed at the Elementary School visited that a different colored *blue tray* was given to students with allergies or other dietary issues. While the intent of this is good, i.e. to ensure that the food service staff correctly accommodates the student’s dietary needs, it is recommended that the parent sign a waiver or sign a permission slip to use the alternate tray, since this has the potential to overtly identify these students or single them out. The Food Service Director may want to work with the school nurse on the development of the form or waiver.

#3- A recommendation was also made to change the signage language on the currently labeled “allergy free” table at the elementary school to *Safe Environment for Children with Allergies*. This was suggested since no school can guarantee and *allergy free environment*. Thanks to the Food Service Director for completing this during the review.

Findings and Corrective Action Needed

Finding/Corrective Action Needed: The notification letters sent to households approved for free, reduced price meals (direct certification AND paper application approval letters), and households denied benefits (income over allowable amount) does not contain the required nondiscrimination statement.

For corrective action please update the forms using the correct statement, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/doc/snt-mail-120415.docx>. **Submit copies of the updated forms and a statement to indicate that you will cross check software template letters each year against DPI prototype, and update as needed to use the correct statement.**

- NOTE: The abbreviated statement: *This institution is an equal opportunity provider* may be used for broadcast advertisements/public service announcements such as the menu. We noted that the full simplified statement did not print on the elementary and middle school menus for the review period (December), likely due to the formatting of this particular month’s menu. Please check this each month prior to publication. The full, correct statement was on the February menu.

Onsite Monitoring Reviews

Every school year, each SFA with more than one school must perform no less than one on-site review of the meal counting and claiming system and the **readily observable general areas** of review identified under 7 CFR 210.18(h) in each school operating the NSLP and 50% of schools operating the SBP administered by the SFA by February 1.

For the SY 2016-17 the Food Service Manager had completed the on-site reviews for all schools last fall prior to the USDA update of the monitoring form. The onsite monitoring forms have been updated to include the general areas of review and a new SBP program onsite review has been developed, both are located on our website at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/doc/nslp-onsite-monitoring.doc>, and <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/doc/sbp-onsite-monitoring.doc> for the breakfast program.

During the review we specifically discussed the scope of the “readily observable” or general areas on the monitoring form since this is a new requirement when the monitoring reviews are completed. Refer to the information regarding the General areas of the Administrative Review posted to the website if further clarification is needed for evaluation in each of these observable areas, <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/administrative-review>. (Scroll down to the area: General Program Compliance.)

It is a recommendation that the Director of Business Services or designee assist the Food Service Director with the completion of the *Resource Management* portion of the reviews next school year.

Local Wellness Policy Summary for Administrative Review

The local wellness policy requirement was established by the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 and further strengthened by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). The final rule requires School Food Authorities (SFAs) to begin developing a revised local school wellness policy during School Year 2016-2017 and *full compliance with the requirements of the final rule by June 30, 2017*.

Language should be added to district wellness policies to permit participation by the general public and the school community including parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, and school administrators in the wellness policy process. In addition, SFAs must designate one or more school officials to ensure each school complies with the policy.

Content of the Wellness Policy

At a minimum the wellness policy must include:

- Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. LEAs are required to review and consider evidence-based strategies in determining these goals.
- Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with Federal regulations for School Meal Nutrition Standards, and the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

- Standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day.
- Policies for food and beverage marketing that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- Description of public involvement, public updates, policy leadership, and evaluation plan.

SFAs must complete an assessment of the policy every three years to determine compliance with the wellness policy, how the wellness policy compares to model policies, and process made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. SFAs must make the Triennial Assessment available to the public. In addition, SFAs must make available to the public the wellness policy and any updates to the wellness policy on an annual basis.

A summary of the requirements can be found at:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/tn/LWPsummary_finalrule.pdf. USDA Food and Nutrition Service has information on the local school wellness policy process and wellness policy elements at: <https://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/school-wellness-resources>. Wisconsin Team Nutrition has several wellness policy resources available including a toolkit, a wellness policy builder, and wellness policy report card at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/wellness-policy>.

DPI has created a Local Wellness Policy Checklist which was used to compare the district's current policy against the WP regulation/requirements. The checklist was left with the Food Service Director during the AR. Please consider these recommendations for additional update of the district policy before July 1, 2017.

The district is aware of the need to update the wellness policy and has plans to invite stakeholders to participate in the update of the wellness policy very soon. This is great! The Food Service Director attended the DPI Wellness Summit last fall and knows about the WI WP Policy Builder and other resources which will be helpful in updating your policy.

Smart Snacks in Schools

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Any fundraiser selling food and/or beverage during the school day which is not in compliance with Smart Snacks standards must be documented as an exempt fundraiser. At Kennedy Middle School, the Administrative Assistant in the Guidance Office tracks exempt fundraisers on behalf of the principal. Student organizations, their advisors, and building administration must work cooperatively to ensure exempt fundraisers are accurately documented. Remember, each student organization may hold up to two exempt fundraisers for up to two consecutive weeks each during the school year. The district wellness policy will be reviewed and updated this spring. We recommended including language to address Smart Snacks and competitive food sales during the school day. Please note, exempt fundraisers are in direct conflict with current district policy, which disallows sale of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day.

Professional Standards (PS)

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 amended 7 CFR Parts 210 and 235 of the regulations to institute hiring standards for the selection of State and local school nutrition program directors and

requires *all personnel* in the school nutrition programs to complete annual continuing education/training. These regulations are expected to result in consistent, national professional standards that strengthen the ability of school nutrition professionals and staff to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. These regulations took effect July 1, 2015.

Commendations

The food service manager has done a very good job to document training for the SY 2015-16 and SY 2016-17 for herself and all food service staff in the district. She has documented training efforts and has maintained a file of all training attended. She also continues to monitor that the staff are meeting the training requirements per their respective PS category. We appreciated her passion also for the importance of a professionally trained nutrition program staff!

Food Safety, Storage and Buy American

Food Safety Inspections

Commendations

Every school operating USDA School Child Nutrition Programs, must have two food safety inspections during each school year, one in the fall of the school year, which is an actual Food Safety Inspection, and the inspection in the spring is typically a review of the site's Food Safety Plan. Food safety inspection reports are required to be posted in public view.

The food safety (fs) plans at each school were reviewed and were found to be current and very well completed. Each school had required food and equipment temperature logs, food safety reporting agreements for each employee, and the lead staff had completed the food safety checklist at least one time this school year. Review of the food safety inspection reports for last school year and this year found very few findings/corrective action. Staff at the schools were also well trained in the area of food safety and sanitation.

The kitchens and equipment were very clean and well maintained. At least one staff person in the satellite schools (elementary schools) has a Serv Safe certification. At the middle school visited 3 staff have the certification, and 7 food service staff at the high school have the certification. Excellent!

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

#1- The server at the Elementary School visited was not aware that the most recent inspection report needed to be publicly posted. The report was located in the kitchen which is not a public location. **Corrective action was not requested since the report was moved to an appropriate location during the AR.** Thank you. The Middle School report was near the tray return area in the cafeteria.

#2- The booster heater at the Middle School (dish machine) is not properly bringing the rinse temperature up to the required temperature (180° F). This is a new booster heater within the last year. Please continue to work with your vendor to rectify the problem, or replace this with a model that can

ensure dishes/utensils are properly sanitized. This should have been a finding on recent food safety inspections.

#3- The hose containing the sanitizer (Middle School) used in the manual dishwashing procedure extended into the water. This creates a cross-connection causing water to backflow into the sanitizer.

We discussed putting a hook on the wall to hold the hose, or cutting the hose so it no longer hangs in the water. Please take action to correct this.

#4- **No Thank You Table** - Both the Director of Food and Nutrition and the lead at Kennedy Middle School expressed interest in a no thank you table. Source reduction should be considered first and foremost. Please note, school food authorities are no longer required to obtain approval from the School Nutrition Team for no thank you tables or food donations. Specific standard operating procedures (SOPs) must be developed and in place to ensure the safety of any food or beverage placed on a no thank you table. Resources are in development and will be posted to the [Food Safety webpage](#) as they become available. Local health and food safety codes apply. Consult your local regulatory authority.

Buy American

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

Regulations took effect with the start of the 2016-17 SY for the *Buy American provision*. This provision requires SFAs to purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, *domestic agricultural commodities or commercial food products*. “Domestic Commodity or Product” are defined as an agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States and a food product that is processed in the United States using substantial agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States. “Substantial” means that over 51 percent of the final processed product consists of agricultural commodities that were grown domestically. Products from Guam, American Samoa, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands are allowed under this provision as territories of the United States.

The Buy American provision (7 CFR Part 210.21(d)) is one of the procurement standards SFAs must comply with when purchasing commercial food products served in the school meals programs. The Buy American provision should be included in solicitations, contracts, and product specifications. A reply offer to comply with Buy American terms in a solicitation ensures contractors are aware of Buy American requirements. Further, bidder assurance of the Buy American provision ensures that the bidder is responsive and responsible to the solicitation.

The district is part of a Buying Coop and the bids/Request for Proposals contained Buy American language. The Coop might want to add some additional assurances to the next prime vendor bid in the case of noncompliance.

The AR requires the State Agency to assess compliance by checking 1-2 items in a variety of food categories. Three non-domestic products were identified – canned pineapple from the Philippines, canned tropical fruit from Thailand, and cucumbers from Mexico. Non-domestic products must be documented, including the reason for exception to the Buy American provision. The food service director should work with distributors to see if these products are available domestically. If they are

not, document this on the Non-compliant Product List, <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/doc/buy-american-noncompliant-list.docx>.

Note: The use of this form is the exception, not the rule. I encourage the Food Service Director to read what is posted about *Buy American* on the website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/procurement/buy-american>. You might also read thru the USDA memo, SP24-2016, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP24-2016os.pdf>.

If there are additional questions about Buy American the food service manager should ask them during the upcoming procurement review.

School Breakfast Program (SBP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Outreach

School Breakfast Program

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

At the beginning of the school year, the SFA must notify families of the availability of breakfast and schools should send reminders regarding the availability of the SBP multiple times throughout the school year. District has signage at each of the participating breakfast schools to encourage students to participate and there is language on the menu and the website regarding availability of the breakfast program. The district also offers students eligible for reduced price meals breakfast at no charge.

Breakfast Promotion

District participation in the breakfast program is very low. One recommendation to increase the breakfast participation is to consider offering breakfast in the classroom or a mid-morning breakfast model. This latter has been successful particularly at the Middle School level. More information about potential breakfast service models as well as financial models can be found in the Serving up a Successful School Breakfast Program guide: <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/school-breakfast-program>. A Breakfast in the Classroom Toolkit is also available if that option is considered: http://fyi.uwex.edu/wischoolbreakfast/files/2009/10/BIC_Final-web.pdf

Summer Food Service Program Outreach (SFSP)

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

- A goal of USDA Child Nutrition Programs is to ensure all students have access to healthy and nutritious meals year round. Even though a summer feeding program is not operated at Germantown School District USDA would like all SFAs to inform families of where their students can receive a free meal in the summer months. SFAs can inform families of summer meals via the following methods:
 - Promotion of the summer meals locator on the **DPI Summer Meals website**
 - Promotion of calling 211 to locate meals in the area
 - Promotion of the ability to text ‘food’ to 877-877 to locate meals in the area
 - Promotion of the USDA Summer Food website <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks>

Near the end of this school year, it can be a simple paragraph in the district newsletter sent home to students, or putting up free posters and/or mail these items free of charge. For more information on the SFSP contact:

Amy J. Kolano, RD, CD
Summer Food Service Program Coordinator
Phone: 608.266.7124
e-mail: amy.kolano@dpi.wi.gov

5. OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS REVIEWS

Special Milk Program (SMP)

Comments/Technical Assistance/Compliance Reminders

The district offers the SMP only at Rockfield Elementary School (this was not a reviewed school for this AR) for Early Childhood students since these students are not full day, and do not have access to the meal programs. The milk counts for December 2016 were reviewed and matched the reimbursement claim. Good job!

The *correct* method for computing average dairy cost was discussed with the claim preparer. She plans to use this method moving forward. Thank you!

Dr. Tony Evers, State Superintendent of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, shares a vision that every student will graduate prepared for college and career in an initiative called “Agenda 2017”. His goals are for students to have the knowledge, skills, and habits that will allow them to succeed in life after high school. Access to quality nutrition plays a major role in developing those life-long habits.

The School Nutrition Team believes that what school nutrition programs do every day plays a very important part in the success of every child being able to graduate. We all know that well-nourished children are ready to learn. Thank you for all you do to ensure your students’ success.

For more information on this initiative, please visit the Wisconsin DPI Every Child a Graduate webpage dpi.wi.gov/statesupt/agenda-2017.

