

SCHOOL LUNCH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Notes – January 11, 2019

Attendees

NYS Education Department (SED) – Child Nutrition Program Administration

Sandy Sheedy

Raemie Swain

NYS Office of General Services (OGS) Food Distribution:

Maureen Barbic

Debbie Hesch

Barbara Marshall

Gabrielle Viens

Ryan Collins

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA): Unable to attend. Report provided.

USDA: Unable to attend due to federal government shutdown

SLAC Area Representatives:

Area A – Unable to attend. Report provided.

Area C - Tami Augugliaro, Food Service Director, Lancaster Central School

Area D - Kim Corcoran, Food Service Director, DCMO BOCES

Area E - Chris Whitmore, Food Service Director, Rome City School District

Area F - Dave Gravin, Food Service Director, Potsdam Central School

Area G - Michael Robinson, Food Service Director, New Paltz Central School District

Area J - Lisa Ostrowski, Food Service Director, North Colonie Central School District

Area K - Regina Dunne, Food Service Director, Smithtown Central School District

Area L - Brian Wright, School Lunch Director, Baldwinsville Central School District

NYC – Pablo Lastra, New York City Department of Education

NYS Department of Education – Child Nutrition Program Administration

- State Ed is approved to make payments to schools through March 31, 2019. Operations will continue status quo while federal government is shutdown.
- State Ed is preparing a response to nine findings in a USDA Management Evaluation (ME) that focused on Civil Rights. State Ed will be doing concentrated training to make sure each school is compliant. Webinars will be planned, and the website will be updated.
- New regulations went into effect as of this School Year – July 1, 2018. The three items are in the final federal rule but allows for state flexibility.
- State Ed will confirm that the green “And Justice for All” posters are the most up-to-date.

Negative Balances:

- Some of the strategies that schools were using to get lunch payments were illegal (not walking at graduation, not getting their diplomas, etc.). Going to your legislator will be the best way to change that.
- Students can never charge ala carte items.
- There are still concerns that every school business official interprets differently.
- Balances are growing exponentially, tripling in some instances.
- I have noticed that the biggest change is with the high school level students. We used to be able to "tactfully" let students know their balances and that they needed money on their account. Now with not being able to do that there is a significant increase in our negative balances. It is at least four times what it was this time last year. I am spending a lot more time on the phone, sending e-mails and letters to parents trying to collect the funds owed to us. For example, in one week, my assistant spent about 2½ hours making calls to parents. Out of 21 calls, one payment was received.

Equipment Grants

- Schools are encouraged to apply. Applications must be postmarked by February 15, 2019.
- Each application is reviewed three times by State Ed.
- State Ed will look into adding reminders to their website for equipment grants and site reviews.

30% NYS Initiative

- USDA Foods, (“Brown Box”, Pilot, USDA-DoD Produce, Diversion) cannot be counted in the 30% calculation. There is a calculation tool on SED’s website to calculate the minimum annual amount of NYS food purchases required to apply for additional reimbursement.
- State Ed will get clarification if the fee paid for “Fee for Service” to get a further processed item will be allowed.

New York State School Nutrition Association (SNA): Jennifer Martin was unable to attend but provided the following report:

Upcoming Events:

January 28-29, 2019	NYSNA Legislative Action Conference, Albany, NY
February 28, 2019	FOCUS Deadline (Spring Issue)
April 25, 2019	FOCUS Deadline (Summer Issue)
July 25, 2019	FOCUS Deadline (Fall Issue)
August 6-7, 2019	NYSNA Leadership Conference and House of Delegates
October 25 - 27, 2019	NYSNA Annual Conference, Niagara Falls, NY
October 27, 2019	NYSNA 2019-20 Executive Board Meeting, Niagara Falls, NY

2018 Regional Industry Seminars (RIS) (recap)

- Had new venues for Long Island and Hudson Valley (Fishkill) shows
 - Long Island – still working on finding a venue that was as good as the Marriott but at an affordable price. The Inn was affordable, but parking and room setup were not ideal.
 - Hudson Valley – no luck yet on a 2019 venue. Industry was not happy with attendance for 2018 and wants to combine Saratoga and Hudson Valley shows for future (probably find a venue in Albany).
- 2019 Program: No official presentations, but we will have all state agencies available one hour prior to exhibits to assist attendees with program questions/technical assistance. We will email attendees prior to the show for specific questions and will pass along to the state agencies.
- Looking into allowing student taste-test panels. Other states are doing this, and we will see how this all works and if it is worth trying.
- Reminder that there will NOT be a Rochester RIS for December 2019 as we will be in Niagara Falls in October. Members may attend the Syracuse show if they need more time after the conference.
- 2019 Syracuse – December 17, 2019 - Holiday Inn
- 2019 Saratoga – December 18, 2019 - Gideon Putnam

2019 Legislative Action Conference

January 28-29 in Albany at the Hilton downtown

2019 Legislative Agenda: To eliminate the reduced-price meal category:

- Currently, New York schools serve 6,817,042 reduced-price lunches and 2,472,041 reduced-price breakfasts, which impact approximately 400,000 kids each day. NYSNA proposes that the State provide schools with an additional 25 cents per meal to replace the amount currently paid by the student under the reduced-price meal program. This would cost the State approximately \$2,322,270.
- Further, this proposal would complement the Governor’s anti-shaming initiative by ensuring a child is not embarrassed for paying a quarter for a meal when the student behind him/her is paying \$2.80. Eliminating the reduced category would also help stabilize school food service programs by eliminating the debt owed by reduced-price meal students who have been unable to pay.

OGS Food Distribution

- Due to federal government shutdown, USDA is unable to attend this meeting.
- The future of the Pilot is unknown. Waiting for word from USDA.
- Received a lot of feedback on the Mixed Berry Cups.
 - Very tart
 - Not a big hit with students
 - Delicious, but the blueberry skins are inedible
 - Students did not accept the product. Tried to use for making smoothies, but there were seeds in the smoothies

- Not ordering again
- Used the mixed berries and they were accepted
- Blueberries were tough
- Frozen it was acceptable. Defrosted, not acceptable
- Too much liquid
- Was looking forward to the mixed berry cups as the students love the frozen strawberries and peaches. Unfortunately, this item was disappointing. Blueberries were very tough to chew.
- Some areas reported having better results when the cups were served partially frozen.
- The Commodity Complaint process is used for more than problems with the product, or packaging. USDA also uses the feedback to monitor for trends and analysis. If a product doesn't meet your expectations, a Commodity Complaint form should be completed and submitted to OGS Food Distribution. If enough comments are received, this can result in modification of bid specs.
- The Distributor contracts for Areas F and G, which Sysco holds, end in June 2019. The bid opening was yesterday. Bids will be reviewed for completeness, vendor responsibility, etc. The results will be published on the OGS website.
 - Area F: Three (3) bids were received: Glazier Packing Company in Malone lowest. Followed by Renzi in Watertown and then Sysco.
 - Area G: Sysco was the only bidder.
- 2019-20 School Year
 - Food Preference Survey will be open through Friday, January 25. Will tally results the following week and set up webinar with SLAC to finalize top ~30 items.
 - Two webinars are scheduled for:
 - Thursday, January 17, 2019: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm
 - Friday, January 18, 2019: 8:30 am – 9:30 am
 - USDA Food Order due dates will be determined by USDA when the federal government reopens.
 - Trade Mitigation Foods available to schools – Items and quantities will be determined when USDA returns. Will be considered a Bonus offering – with no charge to entitlement.
 - A DoD contract for “upstate” will not be in place in the foreseeable future.
- For schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), OGS Food Distribution is working with State Ed to update meal counts in WBSCM which will allow schools to order USDA Foods based on more current figures. Otherwise, meal counts aren't updated until after ordering is over and schools have remaining entitlement that can't be used.
- The new SDA/RA Agreements were sent to schools in December. Agreements need to be signed and returned.
- Schools that have not returned PILOT agreements will be removed

AREA A:

- Heard the canned green beans have been terrible, the frozen green beans were not acceptable either.
 - *Please submit a Commodity Complaint to OGS Food Distribution.*
- Complaints about the quality and appearance of our Del Monte Canned fruit. I have dented cans and I have filed a USDA Complaint.
- Need a better system to give us the information on food available for delivery and distribution sooner than the day before.
 - *Schools must run a Requisition Status Report in WBSCM and compare it to the weekly inventory report received from the distributor to (a) verify all food is on the weekly inventory report and (b) to know what to expect on the next delivery. If you have additional questions, please contact OGS Food Distribution (Ryan Collins) with specific details.*
- When I run a Value of Commodities Received for December it appears that I didn't receive a single brown box item. It was delivered in December but booked for November.
 - *Please contact OGS Food Distribution (Ryan Collins) for assistance.*

AREA C:

- Will OGS continue to offer the Pilot Program next year? Are they trying to phase it out?
 - *The future of the Pilot Program depends on the Farm Bill. We are waiting on word from the USDA.*
- Any progress on deli ham products? Sure wish we didn't have to keep using turkey ham products on our sandwich lines. Feel like I am using every kind of chicken possible on my sandwich bar because we don't have a real deli ham product to use.
 - *Something other than the “100187 – Ham, 97% Fat Free, Cooked, Water-Added, Sliced” on the Foods Available List?*

AREA E:

- The Chicken strips are very good. Many thanks.
- Are there any talks of going back to serving 2% milk because counts have dropped significantly due to this.
 - *No, and you can't get a waiver.*

- Students who miss the deadline but were free, go to paid status. I ran an online Direct Certification Matching Process (DCMP) on 8/13, 9/4, 9/17, 10/1, 10/12, 11/9, 12/19. Between 10/12 and 11/9 and being taken out on 10/18 then being put back in on 11/9 through DCMP. Why?
 - *Is it because reapplication? They can only be made free at the time. It's not live data. They give SED the file around the first of the month. Speaking of procurement - we've been corrected. We are going to have to come up with a template for processing procurement.*

AREA F:

- Complaints about the mixed berry cups.
- Do you know what the price per case for Glazier? I was just wondering what it was like in comparison to Sysco.
 - *The bid prices will be published online. Schools in Area F will be charged a per case assessment fee which will be the same as all schools throughout the state.*

AREA G:

- There have been questions about the Food Preference Survey and hopeful changes for next years donated food offerings.
 - *The Food Preference Survey will be done the same as in past years. Once the results are in, we will talk with SLAC members to determine which items to offer for ordering in WBSCM.*

AREA J:

- Haven't received credit for any of the peanut butter for this year or last year. Don't know who to contact at Sysco.
 - *Michael O'Connor*
 -

AREA K:

- Very happy they love the crinkle fries, strawberry cups, deli turkey and carrots.
- Will there be any foods that we won't be getting for the remainder of the SY?
 - *OGS: There will be no American Cheese in February. It should be back in March. We will continue to get loads that were purchased during the federal government shutdown.*

AREA L:

- Wish OGS would do something about the USDA changing the Pilot programs testing requirements after the year started, so we would not have lost all the money we devoted to the pilot program with Taylor Farms. They let me transfer some of it back to use in procurement. Even if we could roll over a portion of the dollars to next year, at least we wouldn't lose them completely.
 - *OGS does not have oversight on the Pilot. The USDA establishes the requirements.*

NEW YORK CITY:

- On Thursdays we feed only New York State produce. We requested from the DOD vendor only New York apples, but one of the school's noticed that they weren't New York apples.
- Sweet potatoes are not moving well.
- NYC will not use any of the Trade Mitigation Pork.
- The prices of DOD are very high, it was cheaper to purchase oranges commercially. Also, Romaine lettuce was very high due to the recent recall.
- The USDA has a tolerance has a tolerance of 10% to 15% for total defects. We got a new food safety director and she has a much lower tolerance. According to USDA if there are 7 bad in the case, still accept, but our director is going to have zero tolerance.
- Had an issue with the Peanut butter, the only peanut butter we can purchase is Sonny Boy. Just came across Heinz at Regional Show. We are going to contact them on how to bid. We are going to continue getting it purchased.
- The mixed fruit. The one that we have is high fructose corn syrup and we don't want it anymore.
- We like the new Product Information Sheets.

Next meeting is Friday, May 17, 2019