

**School Lunch Advisory Council (SLAC)
Meeting Notes - October 4, 2019**

Attendees:

NYS Office of General Services (OGS) Foods Distribution:

Maureen Barbic
Debbie Hesch
Barbara Marshall
Gabrielle Viens

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Matthew Chotkowski, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), Northeast Regional Office

SLAC Area Representatives

Area A - Karen Bronson-Clark, Food Service Director, School #1 BOCES
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 Gravlin, 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 – Unable to attend
Area L - Brian Wright, School Lunch Director, Baldwinsville Central School District
NYC – Unable to attend

NYS Education Department (SED) – Child Nutrition Program Administration

Raemie Swain
Nicole Travis
Kristin Junco

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Unable to attend

NYS Education Department

No Charge for Reduced Price Meals: New York State funding will provide an additional 25 cents in State reimbursement for each reimbursable breakfast and lunch meal and 15 cents for each reimbursable snack meal served to a reduced-price student to cover the cost previously paid by the student.

Effective July 1, 2019, students approved for Reduced-price meals must receive breakfast, lunch and snack meals at no charge.

Although reduced-price students will be fed at no charge, they are not free, and they must still be claimed in the reduced category. We suggest using the phrase “at no charge” rather than free as it may confuse students, parents and food service staff.

“Increase in State Reimbursement for Reduced-Priced Meals” memo on our website

Farm to School: The Farm to School Census is now open. It's the only national survey that looks at school districts' farm to school activities.

We encourage all schools to participate in the Census, regardless of their current level of farm to school participation as USDA uses Census data to develop new resources, tools, and policies that strengthen and grow farm to school programs nationwide. The farm to school census is now open and NYSED encourages all schools to participate.

30% NYS Initiative: 47 schools were approved for 30%. All 47 schools will be reviewed. The review will consist of a desk audit and an on-site review. The schools will be notified 2 weeks in advance of the onsite review and they will be asked to submit supporting documentation prior to the onsite visit.

So far two schools have been reviewed and neither one met the 30% requirement and as a result the additional funding was turned off.

Two issues that keep popping up are schools attributing 100% of the cost of all items in a recipe when the NYS product contributed 51% or greater in the recipe. Only the cost of the NYS products in the recipe are allowable. And, schools including water as a cost. Water does not contribute to the meal pattern and cannot be included.

Breakfast After the Bell (BAB): The Breakfast After the Bell requirement is in effect for the 2019-20 SY. The list of SFAs required to offer BAB is posted on our website.

There are funds remaining in the BAB Equipment Grant. SFAs that are mandated to implement BAB for the 2019-20 school year may apply for a grant if they have not been awarded previously, or if they didn't request the full \$5,000 in SY 2018-19.

SFAs can choose how they serve BAB. Breakfast in the classroom is a common method chosen and can be successful when done well. However, we have seen issues related to accountability and meal pattern compliance with breakfast in the classroom. To help with this, we have new resources available on our website. We have a tip sheet for teachers when implementing breakfast in the classroom that can be ordered from the resource order form and a video about School Breakfast After the Bell in New York State. We are currently working on a booklet that can be used when training teachers on breakfast in the classroom.

Last school year, all public elementary or secondary schools with at least seventy percent or more of its students eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the federal National School Lunch Program were required to offer all students a school breakfast after the instructional day has begun, "Breakfast After the Bell." This continues for the 2019-2020SY.

Final Rule Flexibilities: Effective school year SY 2019-2020, the rule changes three aspects of the 2012 regulations indefinitely.

It allows flavored, low-fat (1%) milk in school meals and as a beverage sold during the school day. The rule requires unflavored milk to be offered alongside flavored milk.

It requires at least 50% of grains offered weekly in school meals to be whole grain-rich and the remaining grains to be enriched. "Whole grain-rich" products must contain at least 50% whole-grains, and the remaining grain must be enriched.

The Target 1 sodium limit will remain in effect through SY2024-2025.

SFAs are not required to request exemptions for any of the flexibilities and, just as a reminder, smart snacks are based on separate regulations, so this flexibility does not apply to those items.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): New this year, we are using a secure file transfer site to collect eligibility data from schools to ensure that student data is kept private. We don't want to share any personally identifiable information over email as we can't ensure it is encrypted in transit. Program reps will work with schools to send and receive benefit issuance documents during a review year and when applying for CEP.

Late Claims: We have made some changes to our late claim process. If a claim is submitted after the deadline, the claim goes on hold. SFAs will receive an automatic email telling them they must request a late claim exception or a onetime exception. SFAs have 15 days to respond. Failure to respond to the late claim hold within 15 business days will result in the late claim being deemed abandoned and the claim will be denied.

A late claim exception may be requested when the reason for the late claim is beyond the SFAs control (flood, natural disaster, fire). In this case, the SFA would submit an explanation. If we deem the reason for the late claim to be beyond the SFAs control, we will forward the request to USDA for final consideration.

The one-time exception can be used if it is available. An explanation of why the claim was late and a corrective action plan are required. If the corrective action plan is acceptable, the one-time exception will be approved.

As always, downward adjustments may be made at any time; however, if the adjustment is late a Corrective Action Plan is required with the reason for the adjustment and the steps that will be taken to ensure future claims comply.

Civil Rights: USDA is updating the And Justice for All posters. Once we have them, we will get them out to you.

Equipment Grant: Award letters are going out now (they are late) for 2019-20. There is an equipment grant for 2020-21. The goal is to get the application out by December. It will be the same application process.

CACFP Menu: The final rule requirement that grains be credited using ounce equivalents (oz eq) instead of "servings," has been delayed from October 1, 2019 until October 1, 2021.

The final rule, Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, published at 81 FR 24347 on April 25, 2016, specified that meal planners must use ounce equivalents to determine the amount of creditable grain served as part of a reimbursable meal or snack. The new implementation date would allow more time for FNS to develop additional technical assistance materials and for State agencies and sponsoring organizations to provide training and technical assistance to make compliance easier for meal planners nationwide.

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Fall FOCUS magazine has been published and includes an article from OGS Food Distribution. The magazine also outlines the sessions offered at this year NYSNA Annual Conference.

NYSNA Event Dates:

October 25-26, 2019	NYSNA Annual Conference, Niagara Falls
December 5, 2019	NYSNA Regional Industry Seminar – Fishkill
December 6, 2019	NYSNA Regional Industry Seminar – Long Island
December 17, 2019	NYSNA Regional Industry Seminar – Syracuse
December 18, 2019	NYSNA Regional Industry Seminar – Saratoga
January 27-28, 2020	2020 NYSNA Legislative Action Conference, Hilton, Albany
May 12-14, 2020	New York School Nutrition Industry Conference (SNIC)
July 12-14, 2020	SNA Annual National Conference, Nashville, TN
October 16-17, 2020	NYSNA Annual Conference, Syracuse

*Any questions please contact Jennifer Martin

USDA, Food and Nutrition Services, Northeast Regional Office

- USDA - Policy side, things are quiet.
- Farm-to-school grants: New York was very well represented. Five of the seven grants awarded to schools in the Northeast went to New York.

OGS Food Distribution

- The Area A contract and Area C contract for storage and distribution of USDA Foods is ending early. All Direct Delivered Foods (Brown Box) will stop until new contracts are in place. OGS is working to have a new contract in place by December 1, 2019. Schools in the affected area will receive USDA entitlement credit for food that they will not receive.
- A USDA DoD Fresh Contract was awarded in August to Latina Boulevard in Cheektowaga. The USDA DoD Fresh program is another way for schools to utilize USDA entitlement and receive fresh produce delivered directly to their school. Schools will be receiving emails with more information. Deliveries should begin in November, possibly earlier. There is \$150 minimum purchase per drop. Schools don't get to pick the delivery day or time. Orders get entered in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS). DoD will first be rolled out to schools in Areas A and C.

- There are two items that will be available to order through Trade Mitigation for January to March 2020 deliveries – Canned Applesauce and Unseasoned Chicken Strips. Email notification will be sent to schools next week.
- OGS Food Distribution applied for and received State Administrative Expense (SAE) reallocated funding to implement a Food Distribution Inventory Management System. We worked with ITS for over a year on system requirements. An RFP was issued, and a contract was awarded to Colyar Technology Solutions (CTS). Their off the shelf system is being modified to meet our needs. We will test the system and provide training to schools. The anticipated Go Live date is November 2020. This will change the way we manage USDA Foods. The Food Preference Survey and ordering will all be done in the new system. Schools will still order USDA Foods in February/March, but you will see your USDA Food inventory when it arrives at the distributor. You will use the system to choose the number of cases you want to receive on your next delivery. WBSCM will only be used to retrieve historical data for the next three years.

AREA A

1. Are the plastic cups for the fruit cups recyclable?

A. *Look for a recycle symbol on the bottom of the container.*

2. Will schools be reimbursed for the cost of disposal, i.e. bleach and additional dumpsters?

A. *No.*

3. Per the webinar you gave, when will DoD Fresh start? What are the food options?

A. *Expected to start the week of October 14. The catalog will be updated each week and products available will vary - chopped lettuce, sliced apples, etc.*

4. We used some of the food prior to being asked to dispose of it. Is there anything to be concerned about?

A. *No. Area A and C schools were asked to dispose of certain items out of an abundance of caution due to fluctuations in storage temperatures.*

5. When does OGS expect schools to start receiving deliveries from the new warehouse?

A. *Bids are due October 30. We hope to have a new contract in place by December 1 with deliveries resuming in December.*

AREA C

1. The number of food management districts in Area C is quite high and they are in a difficult position now. When they bid for a district, they do it by taking into consideration the USDA Foods that will supplement the expenses they have. Now their expenses will be higher, especially as with the self-operated. We count on high cost items chicken, beef and cheese. For districts that use food management companies the districts will have their entitlement put back into the account, but the management companies will not receive anything to reimburse their additional expense, especially if there is a change of bid winner next season. Is there anything that can be done about this?

A. *OGS will discuss with the Food Service Management Companies.*

2. How do we spend the entitlement that is now freed up?

A. *A USDA DoD Fresh contract will be in place soon. Also, we are allowing USDA entitlement for Area A and C to be carried over into School Year 2020-21.*

3. Will schools be able to replace their foods with the same product that they lost?

A. *Probably not. There are a lot of things that must be sorted out. Food has already been ordered for the year. Many loads will have to be redirected to the new distributor(s) by submitting contract modifications to the USDA. The loads will then need to be redistributed in WBSCM.*

AREA D

1. Final meal counts ended up being way higher than what was estimated at ordering time, so now there is a lot of entitlement left on the table for some schools in Area D.

A. *The USDA DoD Fresh contract is expected to expand throughout the state this school year. Schools will be able to utilize remaining entitlement to order fresh produce through the DoD program.*

2. A school was awarded an Ag & Markets grant to vacuum seal items. However, when it was awarded, it was unknown that a food processing permit was required to vacuum seal items. There is a 14-page state application that needs to be completed to apply for a permit. The school ended up throwing out a lot of food. It was very disheartening.

3. The Broccoli is one of the nicest products that is offered for USDA Foods.

4. Broome County Cold storage has really improved their service. They have been very responsive to issues.

5. Is there any idea of getting Deli – Turkey from USDA? Many schools don't like to process anymore because there are issues with the distributors.

A. *Kim Corcoran is going to contact this school to explain diversion.*

AREA E

1. Arctic is a great distributor.

AREA F

1. Glazier has been good so far. Communication has been good and the inventory and delivery reports are easy to follow and understand.

2. Schools are looking for the program code for the value of commodities received.

A. *Run a Requisition Status Report in WBSCM. Trade Mitigation can be found under **TM_NS** or if you delete 'NSLP' from Program, all programs should appear on your report.*

AREA G

1. Do you know what is going on with the Trade Mitigation Fuji Apples? Req Status Report is showing them as zero.

A. *Trade Mitigation Fuji Apple orders were canceled.*

AREA J

1. I wanted to throw out a suggestion for next year before the catalog comes out. A couple of years ago I received USDA cooked beef crumbles and they were amazing! I used them for tacos, sloppy joes and chili, among other things. No waste, no cooking and draining fat, etc. I always wondered why FSD's did not choose this product over the uncooked ground beef that we always seem to end up with. It occurred to me that if we all had a chance to communicate in advance and share feedback on items we have used and maybe even some recipes, perhaps the top 30 items that we can order might change a little bit. We are all looking for ways to be more efficient and keep labor within budget while providing great food to our students.

A. *This is an excellent idea. Schools in other areas have gotten together in person or on conference calls to share ideas on ways to use USDA Foods and prioritize which foods they want to request on the Food Preference Survey.*

2. The tin foil lids on the OJ cups are faulty. It does not have a good seal and they dump out.

A. *Please submit a commodity complaint to OGS Food Distribution to file with the USDA.*

<https://ogs.ny.gov/usda-food-distribution>

3. Koch Chicken Fajita meat does not have an allergy statement. I checked in the USDA Nutritional Facts it said refer to the box. Checked the box, nothing. Called KOCH directly and they didn't know. They will look it up and call me back. I had to take a picture of the label to send to them so they knew what product it was. I am thinking this shouldn't be this hard to find out this kind of information. If USDA is providing it should be labeled on box.

A. *Vendor responded that their product contains no gluten containing ingredients.*

4. Delivery times are an issue with Sysco. Times are in OGS contract as well as our bid document. It is really a concern on commodity day due to the size of the deliveries. Also new with Sysco

they delivered a processed food order that was not on the weekly commodity report to one building without anyone's knowledge. If rules are changing, someone has to let us know. There was another issue with a Sysco delivery. The truck interrupted bus service and sat in the lot for an hour to take his mandatory break.

A. As you have been, continue to let us know if there are issues and we will continue to bring it up with Sysco. Also, verify the order you are accepting, before signing for it.

AREA K/W – Nothing to report.

AREA L

- 1. The first deliveries from Big Apple went very well and their communication is still outstanding.**
- 2. I continue to be impressed with the professionalism of Big Apple. The spreadsheets from Christina are fantastic and deliveries are accurate.**
- 3. My only concern is the cancelling of product out from under us. I order almost a year in advance and plan on how to use these monies between Brown Box and Pilot program. When they cancel what I have ordered I have lost that money because there is usually nothing to replace it. It gets very frustrating. What other ways are there to spend entitlement funds if products get cancelled?**
- 4. I have a concern about the lack of product in the beginning of the School Year. Specifically, I have 85 cases of broccoli ordered but the first available distribution date I was able to choose was mid-October. The same is true with green beans (10/31 = first available) and corn (10/15 = first available). I have been forced to buy these products and that is unfortunate when I have so much due in.**

A to 3 and 4: Some USDA fruits and vegetables are considered "Seasonal Produce". The first available delivery date for seasonal produce is in October. The available delivery dates are staggered to avoid bombarding schools with too many frozen products all at once.

Schools are encouraged to order 105% of their entitlement to allow for price fluctuations and cancellations. USDA Foods are a request and are not guaranteed. There are a few reasons why schools don't receive what they request.

Orders for USDA Foods are entered in WebSupply in February/March for the school year that begins in July of that same year. OGS Food Distribution must consolidate orders for all 900+ schools that are being delivered to nine warehouse locations. Orders have to be submitted to USDA in full truckload quantities with no less than ¼ truckload going to each warehouse and no more than three stops. As orders are consolidated at the state level, delivery periods are sometimes combined to allow a full truckload of food be ordered. The alternative is to cancel all orders for two or more delivery periods resulting in none of that commodity being ordered for the school year. Combining delivery periods is sometimes the best choice. As orders are consolidated, requested quantities fluctuate.

All order requests are then consolidated by OGS Food Distribution and submitted to USDA to be put out to bid.

After all the orders are consolidated and submitted to the USDA in March/April, schools are notified to run a Requisition Status Report in WBSCM to see if order dates and/or quantities have been changed. At this point, schools should have a pretty good idea of what to expect. Also, throughout the year, schools can monitor order statuses by running reports in WBSCM or looking at the WBSCM Sales Order Change notifications.

It is highly recommended to run the Requisition Status Report in WBSCM at least once a month to see if orders are changed. If at any time, you can't accept the full amount, contact OGS Food Distribution and we will rehome it.

Common WBSCM Sales Order Status Definitions:

Ready for Approval - Requisition created and submitted to co-op or SDA for approval
Approved by SDA - Sales Order approved by SDA (OGS Food Distribution)

Approved by SpAgency - Sales Order approved by USDA

On Invitation - USDA has placed a Sales Order on a bid invitation

Purchased - Sales Order that has been fully purchased by USDA

Order Received - Sales order has been received at your distributor

Cancelled - Requisition/Sales order has been cancelled

Applied - Redonation, redistribution, entitlement increments or decrements have occurred on an order

6. Concerned about the cancellation of applesauce cans. Has a new vendor been found? Product purchased?

A. There were vendor issues. Not sure if USDA will rebid. There will be a Trade Mitigation offer of canned applesauce for January – March 2020 deliveries.

7. Truly appreciate the Trade Mitigation products offered. These items are a true “Bonus”.

8. Dented cans are always an issue but not as bad in past years.

NYC Board of Education – Unable to attend.

Discussion Question

1. Can we move the meeting next year to coincide with the SNA conference since OGS and Area Representatives are all attending SNA?

A. For further discussion at the January meeting.

School Year 2019-20 SLAC Meeting Dates

- o Friday January 10, 2020 (Snow date: Friday February 7, 2020)
- o Friday May 15, 2020