

SFSP Intent to Participate Form and Updates

Good afternoon SFSAs,

This email is to provide new information and to re-cap of some critical points from last week's training and Technical Assistance meeting regarding the use of the SFSP during SY 2020-2021. Please remember, until USDA provides guidance, OCN is only approving operations within strict compliance with existing SFSP regulations and the newly released waivers.

When may I start the SFSP?

To expedite the transition from NSLP/SBP to SFSP, we have developed a simple, one page form: [**Request to Participate in SFSP During SY 2020-2021**](#)

[**Please complete this form immediately and return to your Area Specialist.**](#) This will allow **approval of SFSP meals from the date of the form's submission** rather than the date of MARS approval. You will have 5 working days to complete the MARS and waiver process (if needed) from the date the form is submitted. At this time, USDA has not indicated if approval may be retroactive. The form is posted in the Current Announcements/Updates section of our webpage:

<https://www.mdek12.org/OCN>

Will all schools move to SFSP?

This is optional and a decision to be made by the SFA. We anticipate most schools will make the transition so that all students will be provided free meals. Also, the SFSP meal pattern is less complex and reimbursement rates are higher.

How can I serve snacks with the SFSP?

The SFSP allows 2 meals to be served per student, per day. If serving breakfast and lunch on SFSP, a SFSP snack may not be served. However, At-Risk snack and/or suppers may be an alternative. You must complete a CACFP agreement in MARS to participate in At-Risk meals. Reminder: Our office is providing training tomorrow, 9/10. We will offer an additional session next week.

May non-school sites participate?

Not at this time. Pending guidance from USDA, OCN will only approve school based sites.

Must schools operating under Waiver 52 (Under 50% Area Eligibility) be Open sites?

No. We have learned that USDA intends to allow Waivers 52 and 48, Area Eligibility for Closed Enrolled Sites, to work together. By allowing this extension of waiver 48 language to sites qualifying under waiver 52, these schools are no longer required to begin as Open sites and document reasons for converting to Restricted Open. As such, beginning immediately, our office will **approve sites under 50% as either Open or Closed Enrolled**. SFAs must complete the Area Eligibility Waiver and MARS contract to receive final approval of their SFSP agreement.

Reminders:

- The current SFSP agreement will end 9/30/20. Please use this date when completing your dates of operation.
- A new agreement must be completed for 10/1-12/31.
- SFSP 2021 will become available 9/15. (This is to "roll over" the maximum amount of information to simplify renewals)

- New site eligibility and parent pick-up waiver forms were posted to the OCN website. Please begin to use these immediately.
<https://www.mdek12.org/OCN>

We hope the new form will expedite initial approvals and allow more time for SFAs to enter information into MARS.

Stay safe,
Scott

Scott Clements, **State Director**
Office of Child Nutrition and Healthy Schools