



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



# **Reopening Washington Schools 2020: School Nutrition Programs**

# REOPENING WASHINGTON SCHOOLS 2020: SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

*OSPI Return to School Task Force Food and Nutrition Sub-Group*

## 2020

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- FRAMEWORK.....5
- WAIVERS.....5
  - USDA Nationwide Waivers .....6
  - Washington State-Specific Waivers .....6
- SCHEDULING CONCEPTS AND MEAL DISTRIBUTION MODELS .....7
  - Split or Rotating Schedules .....7
  - Remote Learning .....8
- WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.....9
  - Meal Service .....9
  - Masks .....9
  - Sanitizing and Disinfecting Before and After Meal Service.....9
- PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEAL DISTRIBUTION METHODS..... 11
  - Meals in the Classroom: Delivery to Classroom ..... 11
  - Meals in the Classroom: Students Pick-Up Meals in Cafeteria ..... 12
  - Grab-N-Go: Distribution to Students Leaving Campus..... 13
  - Take Home Meals: Central Distribution Location ..... 14
  - Take Home Meals: Delivery ..... 15
- PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES..... 16
  - Physical Distancing and Reducing Touchpoints..... 16
  - Face Coverings and Masks ..... 16
  - Sanitizing and Disinfecting ..... 17
- PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFFING AND TRAINING..... 18
  - Staffing..... 18
  - Training..... 19
    - Training Resources ..... 19
    - Potential Staff Training ..... 20
- FOOD DISTRIBUTION ..... 23

New W-code Products .....	23
Diversion Carryover.....	23
PURCHASING DURING THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR.....	23
Equipment Purchases .....	23
Food Purchases.....	24
Farm to School During COVID-19 .....	24
How Can Schools Buy Locally During the SY2020-21?.....	24
TASK FORCE TEAM MEMBERS .....	26
LEGAL NOTICE.....	27

# FRAMEWORK

OSPI released the [Reopening Washington Schools 2020: District Planning Guide](#) and [Bulletin B059-20 School Nutrition Programs Guide to Returning to School](#) which provided recommendations and guidance for school districts as they plan for the reopening of schools. This guide provides additional details regarding school meals and school reopening.

Many students rely on school meals to meet their nutritional needs. Additionally, the economic impact of COVID-19 has resulted in more families needing assistance. The intent and purpose of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs is to ensure access to meals for students in need.

Meal service is expected to continue whether instruction is happening in-person or remotely.

The overarching framework of School Nutrition Programs should be to ensure access to school meals, with special attention on access by students who qualify for free or reduced-price (F/RP) meals and preparing and providing meals while following Department of Health (DOH) guidelines.

# WAIVERS

Many of the rules and regulations of USDA's Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) do not transfer well to a COVID-19 environment. In the Spring of 2020 during the initial pandemic outbreak, schools were required to close. This unanticipated school closure allowed for the operation of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) under USDA's Emergency School Closure Guidelines. Operation of SFSP, along with multiple USDA nationwide waivers, allowed schools to provide meals to all children ages 0 to 18 years at all sites distributing meals. There was no requirement to obtain or track individual student names or eligibility categories.

For School Year (SY) 2020-21, although the typical school day model may look significantly different, schools will be "open." Therefore, USDA is requiring schools to operate School Meal Programs. The most significant difference from Spring 2020 will be the requirement to complete by-name and category (free/reduced-price/paid) meal counts. Meals may be provided to enrolled students and must be accurately documented and charged to the appropriate accounts. We encourage district administration and food service staff to work closely together to form meal service distribution plans that meet the needs of students and families, while following federal requirements.

## USDA Nationwide Waivers

The USDA Secretary of Agriculture is permitted to establish waivers for the purposes of providing meals under the Child Nutrition Programs. "Nationwide" waivers that are available for all states to elect to use may be issued by USDA. The following waivers apply to all states.

- **Non-Congregate Feeding in Child Nutrition Programs**

This waiver allows meals to be served in a non-congregate meal setting. This waiver is in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

- **Meal Service Time Flexibility in NSLP, SBP and CACFP**

This waiver allows for meals to be served outside of traditional meal times and allows distribution of more than one meal at a time. This waiver is in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

- **Parent and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children**

This waiver allows parents and guardians to pick up meals for students. However, due to the by-name meal counts required by school meal programs, identification and student information will need to be obtained and verified at the time of meal pick-up. This waiver is in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

- **Meal Pattern Flexibility**

This waiver allows meals to be served that do not meet the NSLP/SBP meal pattern. This waiver requires districts to submit individual requests describing the flexibility needed and justification. Waiver requests may be requested as part of the district's meal distribution plan. This waiver is in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

- **Offer Versus Serve (OVS) Flexibility for Senior High Schools in the NSLP**

This waiver removes the requirement to provide meals in an OVS model for high school students allowing for distribution of pre-packed ready-to-go meals. For grades K-8, OVS is not required. This waiver is in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

## Washington State-Specific Waivers

States have the option to request individual waivers specific to their state. OSPI CNS continues to monitor the waivers issued nationwide to determine if and what state waivers may be needed to support program operators. OSPI CNS has submitted the following waiver requests to USDA for consideration:

- **SFSP/SSO Operation and Area Eligibility**

If approved by USDA, this waiver would allow service of meals to all children ages 0-18, using the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) through SY 2020–21. Additionally, school districts utilizing the SSO or SFSP flexibility would be allowed to continue using the area eligibility waiver which has been in effect since April 2020.

- **Potable Water**

This waiver would remove the requirement for students to have access to water during meal service. While we encourage student access to water, we understand the need to decrease the number of touchpoints in schools.

- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Alternate Sites and Parent Pick-Up**

These waivers are approved by USDA and align FFVP requirements to match distribution methods being used to deliver meals.

## **SCHEDULING CONCEPTS AND MEAL DISTRIBUTION MODELS**

The state priority is to serve students with as much face-to-face time with their educators and peers in schools as possible, consistent with health and safety needs. School districts will have the flexibility to choose and adapt a schedule that works best for their community. This schedule choice will drive what meal distribution model(s) are implemented.

School districts should consider the intent and purpose of USDA Child Nutrition Programs to ensure access to meals for students in need.

### **Split or Rotating Schedules**

Split or rotating schedules may entail different configurations of groups of students on campus (i.e., on campus some days, remote learning off campus on other days). Off campus remote learning is considered an “operational day” and meals may be offered to students.

The USDA [Meal Service Time Flexibility in NSLP, SBP and CACFP Waiver](#) allows for meals to be served outside of traditional mealtimes and allows distribution of more than one meal at a time. Meal distribution models may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing meals to on-campus students at meal times for immediate consumption and sending additional meals home with students for following day(s) when student is not on campus.

- Providing meals to on-campus students at meal times for immediate consumption and providing meal pick up locations for remote students.
- Providing meals to on-campus students at meal times for immediate consumption and providing meal delivery to student homes for remote students.
- Combination of the above.

When implementing these different schedules, consider the following areas:

- **Food Safety** – how do you maintain food safety of meals that you are dispersing?
- **Overt Identification of children** receiving free or reduced-price meals.
- **Point of Sale (POS)** – by-name/category meal counts will need to be maintained.

## Remote Learning

Many schools will utilize remote learning for some students. Additionally, all schools should have a plan in place to shift to total remote learning in the case where all school building are required to close.

Meal distribution models may include, but are not limited to:

- Meal delivery to student homes.
- Meal delivery to bus stops.
- Meal distribution sites for daily grab and go pick up by student or families.
- Meal distribution sites for weekly grab and go meal box by student or families.

When implementing these different schedules, consider the following areas:

- **Food Safety** – how do you maintain food safety of meals that you are dispersing?
- **Overt Identification of children** receiving free or reduced-price meals.
- **POS** – by-name/category meal counts will need to be maintained.



# WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

## HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with the Office of the Governor and OSPI, has provided the rules and guidance for student and staff health and safety.

See pages 24-26 of the [Reopening Washington Schools 2020: District Planning Guide](#) for district-wide information. Information specific to food service is below.

### Meal Service

Limit gatherings and potential mixing of classes or groups in the cafeteria or other communal spaces. Consider having students take their meals outside the building or in the classroom. You may accomplish this through meal delivery to classes, or through grab-and-go services. If using the cafeteria, have students sit with their class or group, and ensure physical distance between students and between groups.

Stagger meal times in lunchroom or dining hall. Arrange the flow of students to reduce crowding at handwashing sinks, food vending areas, etc. Space students as far apart at the table as you can. Make sure tables are at least six feet apart.

Individually plate food for each student. The staff, not students, should handle utensils and serve food to reduce the spread of germs.

### Masks

Face coverings and masks are important tools in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Used in conjunction with social distancing and physical barriers, they can help protect workers and the students. Requirements for face coverings for employees are governed by Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) regulations and are tied to the task the worker is performing.

Tasks performed by kitchen workers are identified as medium risk, requiring **disposable face masks**. Additional information can be found in the [Which Mask for Which Task](#) publication.

### Sanitizing and Disinfecting Before and After Meal Service

Schools should have infection control plans, updated to reflect what is known about COVID-19. Increase how often you clean.

- **Cleaning** removes germs, dirt, food, body fluids, and other material. Cleaning increases the benefit of sanitizing or disinfecting.

- **Sanitizing** reduces germs on surfaces to levels that are safe.
- **Disinfecting** kills germs on surfaces of a clean object.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates sanitizer and disinfectant chemicals.

Students should wash their hands before and after meals. The preference is for hand washing, but hand sanitizers may also be used. If using hand sanitizers, ensure that a volume to thoroughly coat the hands (hands should be completely wet) is dispensed. Hand sanitizers must contain 60% or more ethanol alcohol to be effective.

Cafeteria tables should be **disinfected** between students. Disinfectants may likely be different and stronger than what you normally use. Review package label for instructions, including if surfaces need to be rinsed. Coordinate with custodial staff to determine who will be responsible for cleaning items in the cafeteria including tables, counters, and door handles.

# PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEAL DISTRIBUTION METHODS

## Meals in the Classroom: Delivery to Classroom

### Purchasing, Equipment, and Supplies

- Identify, locate, and procure sufficient meal transport equipment and supplies.
- Explore repurposing existing equipment.
- Identify and procure meal packaging materials.
- Plan process for meal ordering.
- Plan process and schedule to deliver meals to classrooms.
- Plan process to transport equipment, leftover meals, and paperwork to cafeteria.
- Test run meal transport equipment. Does it fit through doorways and roll over thresholds? What about carpets and outdoor areas?
- Review menu for "transportability." Will items need to be packaged differently for students to transport?
- Update your Food Safety Program with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for any new meal distribution methods.
- Coordinate with Facilities regarding classroom garbage pick-up and classroom cleaning supplies.

### Point of Service (POS)

- Determine and prepare POS to be used (Rosters/electronic/scanned classroom lists/etc.)
- Develop resources and cheat sheets for teachers and paraeducators.
- Develop plans for roster pick-up and consolidation.

# Meals in the Classroom: Students Pick-Up Meals in Cafeteria

## Purchasing, Equipment, and Supplies

- Identify and procure meal packaging materials.
- Evaluate menu for items not suitable or problematic for student transport.
- Evaluate menu for removal or replacement of all self-service items (salad bars/condiments).
- Plan student movement through service area.
- Evaluate POS for elimination or reduction of touchpoints.
- Obtain/make signage for social distancing and traffic.
- If using reusable serviceware and utensils:
  - Identify tubs or other containers to collect service items.
  - Plan process for return of items to cafeteria.
- Test run tray durability and spill probability of containers if students transport individual meals to classroom.
- Update your Food Safety Program with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for any new meal distribution methods.
- Plan how you will communicate meal pick-up process to students.
- Coordinate with Facilities regarding classroom garbage pick-up and classroom cleaning supplies.

## POS

- Evaluate POS for elimination or reduction of touchpoints.
- Obtain or make signage to remind students to social distance.

# Grab-N-Go: Distribution to Students Leaving Campus

## Purchasing, Equipment, and Supplies

- Identify and procure meal packaging materials.
- Determine if packaging material needs are different for students who walk or bike to school.
- Evaluate menu for suitable items.
- Plan distribution method to students (classroom, when exiting building or loading on bus, etc.).
- Determine and plan for POS.
- Determine if you have adequate cold storage to hold packaged meals.
- Update your Food Safety Program with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for any new meal distribution methods.

## POS

- Consider pre-order system by families to determine who wants to participate in meals and avoid unintended meal charges by families.
- Evaluate POS to eliminate or reduce touchpoints.
- Obtain or make signage to remind students to social distance.

# Take Home Meals: Central Distribution Location

## Purchasing, Equipment, and Supplies

- Identify and procure meal packaging materials.
- Evaluate menu for suitable items.
- Determine method to hold meals once packed – size of cold storage needed.
- Determine equipment needed to transport meals to distribution area – test run to ensure equipment fits through doorways and rolls over thresholds.
- Plan traffic movement through pick-up area and make or obtain signage.
- Update your Food Safety Program with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for any new meal distribution methods.

## POS

- Consider pre-order system.
  - Consult with IT department to determine capabilities.
- Evaluate ability to run your POS (access to laptop/tablet/power/Wi-Fi).
- Evaluate POS for capability to claim student at enrolled site (versus location where meal is distributed).
- Evaluate use of alternative identification/scanning:
  - ASB Cards.
  - Distribute “meal cards”.
- Plan for meal distribution times:
  - Coordinate with administration and do not schedule over planned virtual education sessions.
  - Would families and/or staff benefit from more than one distribution time (i.e., after 5pm)?

## Take Home Meals: Delivery

### Purchasing, Equipment, and Supplies

- Identify and procure meal packaging materials.
- Evaluate menu for suitable items.
- Determine method to hold meals once packed – size of cold storage needed.
- Determine equipment needed to transport meals in buses/vans – test run to ensure equipment fits through bus doorway and where it will be held on buses/vans.

### POS

- Consider pre-order system.
  - Consult with IT department to determine capabilities.
- Determine method for meal counting.
- Prepare rosters.
- Train staff distributing meals on privacy and food safety.
- Determine and write process for meal drop-off.

# PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

## Physical Distancing and Reducing Touchpoints

Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure cafeteria and tables to determine maximum capacity.</li> <li>• Assign seating in cafeteria.</li> <li>• Use outside spaces or multi-purpose rooms for meals.</li> <li>• Maximize air flow by introducing outdoor air or air circulation systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check if propping of exterior doors for air flow is allowed.</li> <li>• Meet with facilities to inquire about ventilation systems</li> <li>• Procure plexiglass dividers for tables</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit menu choices.</li> <li>• Implement a pre-order system.</li> <li>• Eliminate salad bar.</li> <li>• Individually wrap or pre-package all items in single serve containers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete menu planning tool*. <i>See appendix A for tool.</i></li> <li>• Procure single serve packaging supplies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use signage and floor decals to space students.</li> <li>• Deliver meals to classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify equipment that can be repurposed to deliver meals (i.e., salad bars).</li> <li>• Test run delivery equipment – ensure equipment fits through doorways, can roll over carpets and floor thresholds, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review POS processes, including not accepting cash and replacing pin pads with scanners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procure POS scanners.</li> <li>• Develop process and training for teachers or paraeducators to take meal counts.</li> <li>• Set up process with front office to accept and process meal payments.</li> </ul>

## Face Coverings and Masks

Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine what risk category for employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review L&amp;I and DOH requirements:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Which Mask for Which Task</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">L&amp;I Guidance Chart</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procure disposable masks / face coverings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how you might space staff – are there others spaces you can use.</li> </ul>

## Sanitizing and Disinfecting

Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust SOPs to address additional needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on high touch areas.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Facilities to outline responsibilities of each group, products to be used, and product purchasing.</li> </ul>

# PLANNING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFFING AND TRAINING

## Staffing

Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with Human Resources regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Process to request accommodations.</li><li>○ Adjustment for leave requests in association with COVID?</li><li>○ District plan for daily COVID screening.</li><li>○ Protocol or screening requirements for delivery companies.</li></ul></li><li>• Make staffing plans.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Split staff into cohorts to allow for coverage if one group has an active COVID case?</li><li>○ Run different shifts (i.e. evening) to help employees with children home during the day?</li></ul></li><li>• Develop contingency plans for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Change in service models.</li><li>○ COVID outbreak.</li></ul></li><li>• Plan for training (see training section).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you need to request adjustments to screening plans (location and times) to meet food service staff needs?</li><li>• Do you have spaces / assignments for working alone for employees that require accommodations?</li><li>• Do you need to share updated procedures with delivery companies?</li></ul>

# Training

Planning	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan annual training – in-person, virtual or both.</li><li>• Plan small informal trainings during the workday – check on new procedures.</li><li>• Cross train staff to allow greater flexibility and to support contingency plans.</li><li>• Plan training for non-food service staff that may be providing services (i.e., bus drivers, teachers, paraeducators, and volunteers).</li><li>• Consult with your IT department on options and capabilities of virtual trainings.</li><li>• Plan for methods to communicate updated protocols and processes to staff.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Divide training by groups or in-person and virtual.</li><li>• Spread training over multiple days, or schedule one group in the morning and one in the afternoon.</li><li>• Consider technology capabilities of different staff</li><li>• Record training for those not present and for use to train future staff.</li></ul>

## Training Resources

### OSPI Child Nutrition Services

- [Food Services Weekly Webinar: School Year 20-21 Re-Opening](#)

### The Institute of Child Nutrition

- [The Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\)](#)
  - COVID-19 Webinar Series
    - [The Safe Food Handler](#)
    - [Managing Personnel During COVID-19](#)
  - [How to Wash Your Hands](#)
  - [When to Wash Your Hands](#)

### USDA

- [A Flash of Food Safety Handwashing: How to Wash Your Hands](#) USDA FNS Office of Food Safety
- [A Flash of Food Safety Handwashing: Why to Wash Your Hands](#) USDA FNS Office of Food Safety

- Handouts:
  - [Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During COVID-19: Best Practices for Parent Pick Up](#)
  - [Feeding Kids When Schools Are Closed Due to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
  - [Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During COVID-19](#)
  - [Feeding Kids When Schools Are Closed](#)

## Potential Staff Training

### ICN

- [theicn/prevent](#) – webinars for 2020 Safe Food Handler Series
- [ICN Training Calendar](#) – place to find upcoming webinars
- [ICN eLearning Portal](#) – free self-paced online courses for staff
  - Basic Culinary Math
  - Meal Patterns
  - Focus on the Customer
  - Weights and Measures
  - Nutrition 101
  - A 6-part course on preparing healthy meals.
    - CT1: Introduction to preparing meals.
    - CT2: Preparing Fruits, Vegetables, and Salads
    - CT3: Preparing Entree Items
    - CT4: Preparing Soups, Eggs, Dairy, & Sauces
    - CT5: Preparing Breads and Baked Goods
    - CT6: Using Seasonings
- [Food Safety in Schools](#)
- [Introduction to HACCP for SNPs](#)
- [Food Allergies in SNPs – General Food Allergies](#)
- STAR Webinars
  - [STAR Webinar-Maintaining Customer Service While Serving at a Distance](#)
- Produce Safety University Webinars

- [How to Use AMS Market News Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Information in School Meal Programs](#)
- [Writing Produce Specifications](#)
- [Good Agricultural and Good Manufacturing/Handling Practices for Fresh and Fresh Cut Produce](#)
- [The Produce Lab Quality, Condition, & Safe Handling and Preparation](#)

## **CDC Resources for Schools**

- [A fact sheet for School Nutrition Professionals](#)
- [CDC guidance for schools](#)
- [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting \(including schools\)](#)

## **USDA**

- [USDA's Professional Standards Training Base](#) – Users can search for training on various topics and be directed to USDA-approved training.
  - [Special Dietary Needs – Online Training](#) (Colorado Department of Education)
  - [Offer vs Serve – Breakfast Webinar](#) (University of California)
  - [Offer vs Serve – Lunch Webinar](#) (University of California)
  - [Meal Pattern for School Lunch and Breakfast Webinar](#) (Ohio Department of Education)
  - [School Nutrition Toolbox: Offer Versus Serve Online Training](#) (Project PA)
  - [Simple Tricks to Reduce Waste and Increase Veggie & Fruit Consumption in the Lunchroom Webinar](#) (Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs)
  - [Meal Claiming Requirements Webinar](#) (University of California)
- [Team Nutrition's Be in the Know Webinar Series](#)
  - Moving Forward: Update on Food Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs with Guidance for Dried Meat Products [[Recorded Webinar](#)]
  - Additional Meat/Meat Alternates Options for CNPs: Crediting Tempeh and Surimi [[Recorded Webinar](#)]
  - Crediting Coconut and Vegetable Noodles in CNPs [[Recorded Webinar](#)]
  - Crediting Popcorn, Hominy Corn Masa and Masa Harina in Child Nutrition Programs: [[Recorded Webinar](#)]
  - CN Labeling Program: Update for Industry [[Recorded Webinar](#)]

## **OSPI Child Nutrition Services**

- [NSLP Training Page](#)
  - 20-21 Virtual Annual Training
    - At-Risk Afterschool Meals
    - Claiming
    - Meal Applications and Direct Certification
    - Preparing for NSLP Reviews
    - Resource Management
    - USDA Foods 101
    - Verification
  - Misc. Trainings
    - Administrative Review Training
    - Staff Training
    - Program Training
    - Outside Trainings

## **Miscellaneous Handouts**

- [Transitional Menu Planning Tool](#) – Texas Department of Agriculture

# FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Food Distribution of USDA Foods and Washington processed W-codes will continue as planned. Please visit the Food Distribution webpages for SY20-21 information such as product information, and order periods.

## New W-code Products

Due to the variety of distribution models that will be utilized and the need for Individually Wrapped (IW) items, we have added IW items to the list of available W-code items for SY20-21. These items are designated as WIWXXX items. This list is located on the [Food Distribution Ordering and Receiving webpage](#), under the Ordering Information dropdown.

## Diversion Carryover

An adjustment to Diversion Carryover process has been made to accommodate the unexpected school closure last year and its impact on your ability to use your diversions as planned. Information is located on the [Food Distribution Ordering and Receiving webpage](#), under the Diverted USDA Foods dropdown.

# PURCHASING DURING THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

## Equipment Purchases

All purchases of equipment and capital asset must follow proper procurement procedures. Equipment must be necessary; reasonable; allocable.

Equipment is defined as "tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial purposes, or \$5,000."

Some equipment is pre-approved to purchase without prior approval.

- The [Washington State Pre-Approved Equipment List](#) provides the list of equipment that is pre-approved.
- LEAs may purchase these items without prior approval.
- Proper procurement procedures must be followed.

LEAs wishing to purchase equipment not included in the Washington State Pre-Approved Equipment List must receive approval from Child Nutrition Services.

- Complete and submit the Capital Expenditure [Pre-Approval Request Form found on Child Nutrition webpage](#).

LEAs with a locally set threshold for acquisition cost less than \$5,000 must obtain prior approval.

## Food Purchases

All purchases of food must follow proper procurement procedures. Refer to the [Procurement Reference Sheet](#) from the OSPI/Child Nutrition webpages for more information and resources.

### Farm to School During COVID-19

Washington schools are continuing to buy local products they need and support local, Washington farms during COVID-19 affected meal distribution. Many farmers' regular buyers may have been closed or affected by COVID-19, resulting in a surplus of local products. Local farmers and processors may also have fresh, nutritious products that are an especially good fit for the types of food distribution your schools are doing now, such as:

- Putting local menu items in sack lunches and grab-n-go meals.
- Using local ingredients in take-home, scratch-cooked entrees.
- Using FFVP grant funds to buy from local farms.
- Including local produce, dairy, grains, or meats in multi-day meal boxes and other grocery-style distribution.
- Distributing school garden produce or food donations from local farmers to families.

Local farmers can also be a reliable source of food to make sure you have a variety of vendor options available in the case of disruptions or shortages with your other vendors.

### How Can Schools Buy Locally During the SY2020-21?

Check the [WSDA Farm to School Product Availability List](#) to find farmers near you that are interested in selling to schools.

Look for products they might have that work for your current meal distribution model, including:

- Individual servings of whole produce eaten raw.
- Packaged single whole produce items (i.e. bagged single lettuce heads or salad greens, 2lb bags of carrots, 5lb bags of apples).
- Individual servings of fresh cut fruits or vegetables (carrot sticks, apple slices, beet sticks).
- Bulk fresh cut produce for bagging in your kitchen.
- Individually packaged cheese, yogurt, eggs, or other proteins.
- Packaged grains, flour, beans, or lentils for families to cook at home.



Time permitting, obtaining quotes from local vendors to get the best price is within compliance of federal requirements. Federal procurement rules under 2 CFR 200.320(f) allow for an exception to competition during an emergency. If it would cause a delay to obtain quotes, school districts can utilize this exception and buy foods they need that are available from farms or other vendors.

**If the current state of emergency expires during SY2020-21, meaning the exception no longer applies,** refer to OSPI Child Nutrition's [Procurement Resources](#) or [contact WSDA Farm to School](#) for help with competitive procurement methods.

### **Farm to School Resources**

- [Local Food in COVID-19 Response and Recovery](#) from the National Farm to School Network.
- [Strategies & Tactics For Meal Service During School Closures](#) from No Kid Hungry.
- [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#) from the National Farm to School Network.
- [Gardening](#) and [Education & Remote Learning](#) Resources from the National Farm to School Network.

# TASK FORCE TEAM MEMBERS

- Leanne Eko, Director of Child Nutrition Services – OSPI
- Wendy Barkley, Assistant Director of Child Nutrition Services – OSPI
- Elizabeth Beechler, School Meal Programs Supervisor – OSPI
- Susan Shelton, Food Safety Specialist – DOH
- Jodi Japp, Food Service Lead – Monroe School District / Public School Employees of WA
- Rick Traynor, Nutrition Services Manager – Longview School District
- Megan de Vries, Director of Food and Nutrition Services – Edmonds School District
- Joanna Peeler, Food Service Director – Everett School District
- Marianne Culligan, Executive Director – Washington School Nutrition Association (WSNA)
- Becky Droter, School Nurse – Colville School District
- Ryan Peterson, School Bus Driver – Kennewick School District/Public School Employees of WA
- Sam Shick, Nutrition Services Director – Kennewick School District (Sodexo)
- Kathryn Ward, Food Service Director – Shelton School District
- Maddy Thompson, Education Advisor – Office of the Governor

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