

SY 2025–26 School Meals Annual Training Schedule

School Meals Annual Training

OSPI will host annual training in conference format. Each day features OSPI Updates followed by breakout sessions focused on program operation and regulations, best practices, and culinary topics. August 5 sessions are repeated on August 6 to maximize participant access to all sessions. The Basics of Operating School Meals Food Service workshop is offered concurrently on August 5. Attendees are not required to attend both days. Training is free to attend; however, participants must pay for meals, parking, and any overnight stays.

August 5, 2025

| Time | Room 137 | Ballroom A | Ballroom B | Ballroom C | Ballroom D |
|---------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| 7–8 am | Registration | | | | |
| 8–9 am | OSPI Updates | | | | |
| 9:15–10:30 am | Basics of Operating the School Meal Programs – Food Service | Preparing for Your Reviews | Engaging Staff Trainings | Best Practices for Promoting and Implementing the Seated Lunchtime | Revolutionize Your Program: Facility Design & Equipment Strategies that Work |
| 10:45am–Noon | | Mastering Procurement for School Meal Programs | Powerful Promotion: Practical Tips & Success Strategies | Buy American Provision: Navigating Final Rule Changes & the New Non-domestic Food Purchases Cap | Tools & Rules for Capital Expenditures |
| Noon–1 pm | Lunch | | | | |
| 1–2:15 pm | Basics of Operating the School Meal Programs – Food Service | Meals for Washington Students (HB1238) | Creating Engaging Programs: Take Action with OSPI’s “Power Up” Toolkits | Best Practices for Collecting & Processing the CNEEB application | Marketing to the Line |
| 2:30–3:45 pm | | Operating the CEP | From Garden to Cafeteria: Cultivating Fresh and Nutritious School Meals | CACFP Program Oversight in Pre-K Programs | Culinary keystones |
| 4–5 pm | Networking Activity | | | | |

August 6, 2025

| Time | Room 137 | Ballroom A | Ballroom B | Ballroom C | Ballroom D |
|---------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| 7–8 am | Registration | | | | |
| 8–9 am | OSPI Updates | | | | |
| 9:15–10:30 am | NEW! Resource Management: Tools & Rules for Managing Program Finances | Preparing for Your Reviews | Engaging Staff Trainings | Best Practices for Promoting and Implementing the Seated Lunchtime | Revolutionize Your Program: Facility Design & Equipment Strategies that Work |
| 10:45am–Noon | NEW! Counting & Claiming Reimbursable Meals | Mastering Procurement for School Meal Programs | Powerful Promotion: Practical Tips & Success Strategies | Buy American Provision: Navigating Final Rule Changes & the New Non-domestic Food Purchases Cap | Tools & Rules for Capital Expenditures |
| Noon–1 pm | Lunch | | | | |
| 1–2:15 pm | NEW! Not So General Areas of the School Meal Programs | Meals for Washington Students (HB1238) | Creating Engaging Programs: Take Action with OSPI’s “Power Up” Toolkits | Best Practices for Collecting & Processing the CNEEB application | Marketing to the Line |
| 2:30–3:45 pm | NEW! Learning the Smart Snacks in Schools Standards | Operating the CEP | From Garden to Cafeteria: Cultivating Fresh and Nutritious School Meals | CACFP Program Oversight in Pre-K Programs | Culinary Keystones |
| 4–5 pm | Networking Activity | | | | |

Session Descriptions

Basics of Operating the School Meal Programs – August 5 – Food Service (8hr)

This full day training is designed for individuals in a **food service director or menu planner role**. We will focus on the basics of operating a successful school meal program, including meal pattern, menu planning, using your USDA Foods, and implementing an accurate point-of-service meal counting system. This is a hands-on, interactive session that provides opportunities to network and share best practices.

NEW – Resource Management: Tools & Rules for Managing Program Finances *August 6 Only

Join us as we review USDA's Resource Management areas and explore tools to assist with compliance, including the Paid Lunch Equity and Nonprogram Food Revenue tools. We will also dive into basic financial reports and metrics for decision-making to support the financial health of your operation.

NEW – Counting & Claiming Reimbursable Meals *August 6 Only

Join us as we examine the point-of-service meal counting and Offer versus Serve (OVS) requirements for both breakfast and lunch. This will be an interactive session. Participants will be able to practice identifying both reimbursable meals at the point-of-service and allowable meal counting practices for inside and outside the cafeteria.

NEW – Not So General Areas of the School Meal Programs *August 6 Only

Outside the critical areas of review for free and reduced-price meal eligibility, meal pattern requirements, and claims for reimbursement, there's a whole series of general program areas of equal importance. This session will provide an overview of Civil Rights, On-Site Monitoring, Local School Wellness Policies, and Professional Standards requirements that also impact compliance with the School Meal Programs.


NEW – Learning the Smart Snacks in Schools Standards *August 6 Only

This course is designed to assist participants with determining compliance with the Smart Snacks in Schools Standards for foods and beverages sold outside of a reimbursable meal. This will be an interactive session with opportunities to actively assess a variety of a la carte foods and beverages, including coffee drinks, against the Smart Snacks Standards.

Preparing for Your Reviews

Are you scheduled for a review this school year? Join us as we review both the Administrative Review (AR) and Procurement Review (PR) processes, including what documents will be requested, the timeline of review events, and who to contact with questions. Attendees should leave this session feeling more confident and with a series of tips and tricks to prepare for successful reviews.

Mastering Procurement for School Meal Programs

This course is designed to make the complex world of procurement accessible for school meal program directors. Participants will explore various procurement methods, understand federal and state procurement thresholds, and learn how to comply with the Buy American Provision. With practical tips and hands-on activities, you'll leave this session equipped with the knowledge and confidence to manage your school's meal procurement effectively and efficiently.  Attending this session will meet the USDA's annual Procurement training requirement.

CACFP Program Oversight in Pre-K Programs

This session will explore the CACFP meal pattern requirements in comparison with the NSLP meal pattern for preschool-aged students. This training will also provide information and guidance on Vending/Interagency meal agreements, meal counts, site monitoring, common CACFP findings and best practices.

Operating the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

Join us for an insightful session on effectively managing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Attendees will learn best practices, strategies, and tools to optimize CEP operations in your school(s) and district, ensuring all students have access to nutritious meals without barriers while adhering to the federal and state regulations. This is a hands-on, interactive session that provides opportunities to network and share best practices.

Meals for Washington Students (HB 1238)

Elementary schools where 30% or more of enrolled children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals are required to provide meals at no cost to all students under RCW 28A.235.135 (HB 1238) - Meals for Washington Students. Meals for Washington Students differs from other meal service options implemented under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Learn about how this law impacts your Local Education Agency (LEA) and explore options that can increase meal access for students.

Engaging Staff Training

Join CNS Professional Learning Specialist, Ben Brown, for a hands-on exploration of research-backed training strategies! You will leave this session with ideas and resources to power up your staff trainings, better engage staff, and make new learning “stickier”. This session is intended for anyone who plans or delivers staff training, and anyone interested in learning more about how to build great training.

Best Practices for Collecting and Processing the Child Nutrition Eligibility and Education Benefit (CNEEB) Application

OSPI launched the Child Nutrition Eligibility & Education Benefit (CNEEB) Application in school year 2024–25 which merged the Free & Reduced-Price Meal Application and Family Income Survey. ALL schools, including CEP and Provision 2, now distribute the same application to qualify students for meal benefits, Summer-EBT benefits, reduced fees for other programs, and/or to secure other educational funding for the district. Join us for discussion on lessons learned during the first year of implementing the CNEEB application and tools for successful distribution and collection in the coming school year.

Powerful Promotion: Practical Tips and Successful Strategies

Do you have a strong nutrition program but struggle to communicate about all the great things going on in your schools? Do you need practical tips for promoting school meals? Do you want to elevate the role of child nutrition in the minds of students, their families, and school administration? In this panel, district School Nutrition Program staff will share successful strategies to promote school meals programs.

From Garden to Cafeteria: Cultivating Fresh and Nutritious School Meals

Join us for an engaging panel presentation where school food service directors will explore the journey of transforming garden-grown produce into delicious and nutritious meals for students. This session will highlight successful strategies, share best practices, and discuss the benefits of integrating school gardens into cafeteria menus. Attendees will gain valuable insights into how to enhance their food programs, promote healthy eating habits, and foster a sustainable food culture within their schools. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from experts and connect with fellow professionals dedicated to improving school nutrition!

Buy American Provision: Navigating Final Rule Changes and the New Non-domestic Food Purchases Cap

Are you ready for Final Rule changes to the Buy American Provision? Starting in school year 2025-26, School Meals sponsors are required to track all non-domestic food purchases in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and Afterschool Snack Program. Non-domestic food purchases can't exceed 10% in SY 2025-26, 8% in SY 2028-29, and 5% in SY 2031-32. Are you ready? Do you know how you'll track non-domestic foods? Do you know which purchases are counted and which are not? Do you have new procedures in place? If not, this session is for you! In this interactive session, we will cover documentation and tracking requirements, strategies for lowering non-domestic food purchases, and required and best practice procedures. Participants will leave this session with the understanding and confidence to implement Final Rule changes to the Buy American Provision.

Best Practices for Promoting and Implementing the Seated Lunchtime Rule

OSPI revised the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) regarding the amount of time students have to each lunch. Beginning in school year 2029-30, schools must provide students in grades K through 5 with the opportunity to eat lunch for a minimum of 20 minutes, once the students have received their food through the meal service line. Join us for a panel discussion to review best practices and strategies to overcome barriers to implementing the revised rule.

Creating Engaging Programs: Take Action with OSPI's "Power Up" Toolkits

Explore tools you can use to make your meal program even more powerful! OSPI's Power Up Toolkits offer step-by-step guidance and curated resources to create impactful program enhancements. Learn how Washington districts have used the tools to build engagement and excitement with inclusive meals and nutrition education. We'll also share how you can join the SY 2025–2026 Power Up your Program course to put the tools in action with additional support from peers, partners, and the OSPI Training Team.

Capital Expenditures and Equipment Purchases

This session clarifies State and federal requirements for equipment purchases and other capital expenditures charged to the non-profit food service account. Learn best practices for timing procurement, tips for writing equipment specifications, and other considerations for capital expenditure pre-approval requests.

Revolutionize Your Program: Facility Design & Equipment Strategies that Work

This interactive session combines an overview of the *Facility Design and Equipment, Purchasing for School Nutrition Programs* resource with a peer-to-peer roundtable discussion. Learn practical strategies for planning kitchen renovations, selecting the right equipment, and navigating procurement. Then, hear from fellow school nutrition professionals as they share real-world challenges, solutions, and successes in designing and equipping effective school kitchens.

Culinary Keystones

This engaging one-hour session equips culinary professionals with key skills to improve consistency and efficiency in the kitchen. Through a blend of lecture, demonstration, and verbal interaction, participants will learn to interpret standardized recipes, organize

mise en place, and apply accurate measurements and portion control. Walk away with practical insights to enhance food quality and streamline production.

Marketing to the Line

This engaging session explores how behavioral economics and food presentation can drive healthier choices in school meals. Through a blend of lecture, live demo, and participant discussion, you'll learn practical strategies to enhance the appeal of the service line and market meals more effectively—no special equipment required.