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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

July 22, 2026

(X) Action Required
Due date: September 1, 2026
(X) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 025-26 CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
Special Milk Program (Public Schools)
Special Milk Program (Select Private Schools)
Special Milk Program (Non-Residential Child Care Institutions)

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Special Milk Program Application Renewal for School Year 2026–27

CONTACT: Elizabeth Beechler, Director of School Meal Programs
360-522-2103, elizabeth.beechler@k12.wa.us
Rachel Floyd, Special Programs Specialist
360-742-4155, rachel.floyd@k12.wa.us

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

The purpose of this bulletin is to release the Special Milk Program (SMP) application for School Year 2026-2027.

The SMP provides milk to children in schools, childcare institutions, and eligible camps that do not participate in other federal child nutrition meal service programs. The program reimburses schools and institutions for the milk they serve. Reimbursement rates are updated annually and effective July 1-June 30. Information on the reimbursement rates can be found on the [Claims, Fiscal Information, and Resources webpage](#).

Who is Eligible for the Special Milk Program:

- Sponsors that only serve milk and do not participate in any other federal Child Nutrition Programs are eligible for the SMP.

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that serve milk to split-session kindergarten students that do not have access to either the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP).
- LEAs that serve milk to children enrolled in childcare centers. No other age groups, classes, or programs within the LEA may participate.

Applications are due September 1, 2026. Late or incomplete applications may not be approved in time to claim reimbursement for September milks.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Specific information is collected in the application process. *Attachment 1–Special Milk Program Application and Program Information* provides descriptions about terms used in the SMP and some of the information to be collected.

Program sponsors must submit applications in the Washington Integrated Nutrition System (WINS). Please complete the following steps:

1. Update Contact Information

New and returning sponsors must complete an online application in WINS. WINS is an online system used to collect application information and to process claims for reimbursement.

a. New Sponsors

Designate a WINS Sponsor Administrator by signing and submitting *the Access Rights/User Authorization for Child Nutrition Programs* form.

Once the authorization is processed, an email from noreply.WINS@k12.wa.us will be sent to the system administrator with a username and link to the WINS sign on webpage.

b. Returning Sponsors

Staff contact information must be entered or updated when completing the SMP sponsor application. Use the [Updating Sponsor Contacts Information Sheet](#) for detailed information.

2. Submit Your Application

- a. Select the 'Renew Application' button on the 'Applications' tab and complete the Sponsor Application Wizard.
 - i. Review and update all sponsor information in the 'Sponsor Profile–Sponsor Information' section in WINS.
 - ii. Staff Contact information must be entered or updated when completing the application. **Ensure contact information, including e-mail addresses, are current, and entered correctly.**

- b. Go to the '*Sponsor Profile–Current Overview*' tab to view a list of sites. For each site that will serve milk:
 - i. Complete a site application, including review and update of staff information.
 - ii. Create site calendars.
- c. Upload application documents into WINS.

The application includes completing specific forms and documents depending on the type of sponsor. These forms must be uploaded into WINS. Information on WINS and job aids can be found on the [WINS webpage](#) or in WINS under the information drop down. Use the [Adding Documents in WINS](#) guide for details on uploading documents into WINS. The WINS Sponsor Application will indicate what documents will need to be uploaded.

3. Review the Child Nutrition Programs Permanent Agreement

Sponsors of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs enter into a permanent agreement at the time of their initial approval. This agreement stays in effect during subsequent years of approved program operation. To view the Child Nutrition Permanent Agreement terms and conditions, please reference your copy or the [Sample Permanent Agreement](#).

Local Education Agencies that change their legal name resulting in a new Federal Tax Identification Number (FEIN) must report this change to OSPI before starting the application process.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Counting Milk and Claiming Reimbursement

Milk counts are to be taken at the point of service where the student receives reimbursable milk. Milk counts must be based on number of ½ pints (8 fl. oz.) of milks served to students and cannot be based on student attendance. Sponsors must track and document the number of ½ pints of milk served and submit these counts in their claim for reimbursement electronically through WINS. Sponsors must retain documentation to support claims, including daily count sheets, delivery receipts, and POS records. These records must be kept according to federal and state record retention requirements and made available upon request for audit.

All claims must be submitted electronically through WINS in accordance with OSPI claim deadlines. Instructions for submitting claims in WINS are available on the [OSPI WINS webpage](#).

If you have a question relating to the claim, the reimbursement process, or how a payment is calculated, please contact Child Nutrition Fiscal and Claims, at cnsfiscalservices@k12.wa.us or call 360-725-6200.

Pricing and Non-Pricing Programs

Sponsors may choose to operate a pricing or non-pricing program.

Pricing programs charge students for milk. There are two options for pricing programs. Sponsors may claim all milk served at the paid milk rate or sponsors may claim milk served based on student eligibility status. Sponsors that choose to claim milk served based on student eligibility must annually distribute the Child Nutrition Eligibility & Education Benefit (CNEEB) Application to all student households.

Non-pricing programs do not charge students for milk. Sponsors may choose **not** to collect CNEEB Applications and then claim all milk served at the paid rate.

CNEEB application materials are updated each year and reflect changes to income guidelines and program regulations.

Available Materials

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) income guidelines, effective July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027, and free milk applications/materials can be found on the [Special Milk Program webpage](#).

- [2026-27 CNEEB Application](#)
This application allows households to apply for free milk. LEAs must process applications within 10 working days. The determining official is the individual(s) responsible for reviewing and approving free milk applications. A hearing official is the individual responsible for reviewing and making a determination regarding an appeal to a benefit determination. The hearing official cannot be the same individual as the determining official. The Letter to Household should include the name of the Hearing Official.
- [Letter to Households](#)
This letter provides instructions for completing the application for free milk benefits.
- [Notice of Eligibility for Free Milk](#)
This letter may be used to notify households of student(s) who have been approved for free milk benefits.
- [Notice of Denied Eligibility for Free Milk](#)
This letter may be used to notify households of student(s) who have been denied free milk benefits. Households with students who are denied must be given written notification of the denial.

- [Public Release for Free Milk](#)

Regulations require sponsors to notify the public when the SMP is available. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides a public release to the media that meets this regulation. However, LEAs are encouraged to provide a public release and a supply of CNEEB Application forms to local organizations that provide assistance to low-income families such as: food banks; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinics; post offices; and employment security offices.

Civil Rights Requirements

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the USDA school meal programs are required to inform potentially eligible persons of their rights to receive program benefits. The USDA updated their [Civil Rights Non-Discrimination Statement](#) in July 2025. Additional guidance will be provided when received by USDA.

Washington State has additional protected classes that are not outlined in the USDA Civil Rights Non-Discrimination Statement. **Public School Districts and Public Charter Schools must put both the USDA, and the schools' non-discrimination statement on widely disseminated program materials.**

Please review the [Civil Rights Reference Sheet](#) for more information on requirements in Child Nutrition Programs.

Translations and Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Program materials and other communications with households must be in a language parents or guardians can understand. LEAs have the responsibility to be aware of language needs of LEP households that they serve.

The OSPI [Limited English Proficiency Reference Sheet](#) provides details on requirements.

Child Nutrition Financial Report (CNFR) in WINS

The CNFR compiles financial data about School Meal Program operations in the prior program year. CNFR data is used by OSPI for financial oversight, monitoring of nonprofit school food service account balances, and compliance with net cash resource requirements. For SY 2026–27, the CNFR will represent data from the SY 2025–26 Special Milk Program operations. The CNFR is due in WINS by December 31.

For more information on the CNFR, please review the [Child Nutrition Financial Report Reference Sheet](#).

Audits

Sponsors are required to maintain records that identify all federal funds expended and recorded on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) as identified by their

unique Assistance Listing Number (ALN). Funds for this program are provided by the Special Milk Program for Children, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 10.556. Federal Award Identification Numbers (FAINs) for Child Nutrition Programs can be found on the [Accounting Reporting Codes Reference Sheet](#). Sponsors must make grant records available for review and/or audit by officials of federal agencies, State Auditor's Office, Government Accountability Office, and OSPI or designee.

Sponsors expending federal funds in excess of the single audit threshold established under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F, from all federal sources combined, must undergo an audit in accordance with applicable federal requirements. Audits must be completed within nine (9) months of fiscal year end and submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC) by the earlier of 30 days following receipt of the audit report or nine (9) months following the end of the fiscal year.

Indian Tribes or Tribal Organizations can opt out of making their reporting packages publicly available on the FAC website (2 CFR 200.512 (b)(2)). However, if they choose this option, they must submit a copy of the audit report to OSPI CNS, Attention: CNS Fiscal Services.

If you have any questions regarding audits, please contact Child Nutrition Fiscal and Claims, at cnsfiscalservices@k12.wa.us or call 360-725-6200.

CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

All claims for reimbursement are submitted electronically through WINS. Instructions for submitting claims are available on the [OSPI WINS webpage](#).

If you have a question relating to the claim, the reimbursement process, or how a payment is calculated, please contact Child Nutrition Fiscal and Claims at cnsfiscalservices@k12.wa.us.

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Rachel Floyd, Special Programs Specialist, at 360-742-4155 or email rachel.floyd@k12.wa.us. The OSPI Telecommunication Relay Services number is 711 or 1-800-833-6384.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

Jenny Plaja
Chief Impact Officer

Leanne Eko, RD, SNS
Chief Nutrition Officer
Child Nutrition Services

CR:ln

Attachment 1: Special Milk Program Application and Program Information

Assurance of Civil Rights Compliance

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete [Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling 866-632-9992 or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **Fax:** 833-256-1665 or 202-690-7442; or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov

OSPI provides equal access to all programs and services without discrimination based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Questions and complaints of alleged discrimination should be directed to the Equity and Civil Rights Director at 360-725-6162/TTY: 360-664-3631; or P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200; or equity@k12.wa.us.