



April 4, 2024

Amanda Cox, Executive Director
Future Public Charter School, Inc.
511 E 43rd Street
Garden City, ID 83714

Dear Director Cox,

On January 30, 2024, State Department of Education (SDE) Coordinator Cambria Steffler, Director Lynda Westphal, and Procurement Specialist Kat Forstie conducted an Administrative Review (AR) of Falcon Ridge Public Charter School for the following United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- USDA Foods
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

The site reviewed was the Future Public Charter School.

The State agency (SA) would like to commend Lauren Tassos and the entire staff of Future Public Charter School for their hard work operating the school nutrition programs.

OVERVIEW

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, amended by the addition of Section 201 to the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, requires a unified accountability system designed to ensure that participating school food authorities (SFA) comply with USDA requirements. The objectives of the AR are to:

- Determine whether the SFA meets program requirements
- Provide technical assistance
- Secure any needed corrective action
- Assess fiscal action and, when applicable, recover improperly paid funds

REVIEW FREQUENCY AND SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act mandates state agencies conduct an AR a minimum of one time during a three-year cycle, however Idaho has received a waiver to conduct reviews on an alternate schedule to evaluate Critical and General Areas of Review, including:

- Performance Standard 1: Meal Access and Reimbursement
- Performance Standard 2: Meal Pattern and Nutritional Quality
- General Areas of Review: Resource Management, Food Safety, Local School Wellness Policy, Smart Snacks, Civil Rights, Buy American, Professional Standards, and other areas of general program compliance.

These were the SA determined findings and the SFA response to the findings:

FINDINGS AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

Finding 1 – Certification and Benefit Issuance

The State agency reviewed 141 applications and found 5 applications that need additional clarification or information. Two applications indicate no income. The SFA should contact the households to confirm that this is correct. One application had two household members listed but indicated a total of 3 on the application. One application listed the income as \$13.00 weekly for one household member and \$14.00 two times a month for the other household member. The SFA must contact the household to verify if these are the correct incomes. One student on the review of application list is no longer enrolled in the school and should be removed.

CAP: The SFA must contact the households for additional clarification and correct the applications, if necessary. Upload the corrected applications or adverse action letters in MyIdahoCNP with a corrected benefit issuance list.

Date of CAP Completion: Due February 14, 2024; Completed February 7, 2024

Response: The Food Service Director (FSD) uploaded copies of all applications showing the information has been corrected. The application with incorrect income information did change from free to reduced. The application, adverse action letter, and corrected benefit issuance list was uploaded.

Finding 2 – Verification

Tax statements and returns are not allowable proof of income sources without collateral contact (pages 107-108 of Eligibility Manual for School Meals). It is the responsibility of the household to provide adequate information so that the district can properly complete the verification activity. This enables the district to follow up with the household and to ask further questions, or to rely on the collateral contact information (obtained in writing or verbally with the household's permission) to determine the gross income amount. Please use the most current information available for a more accurate view of the family income and reference the most current Eligibility Manual for guidance on self-employed individuals.

CAP: Contact the household that submitted tax documents for verification to get additional income information or contact a collateral contact to confirm their gross income amount. Upload a copy of the original application, and documentation from a collateral contact confirming their income or other income documentation from the household. If this information cannot be retrieved, upload a copy of the adverse action letter and benefit issuance list showing the student(s) on the application have been changed to paid.

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Date of CAP Completion: February 14, 2024; Completed February 7, 2024

Response: The FSD contacted the household to ask for a collateral contact to verify income. The household declined to provide additional information. The FSD uploaded the adverse action letter and updated benefit issuance list showing the benefit was changed to paid after 10 days.

Finding 3 – Verification

The process of verification begins on October 1st (or the first operating day in October) and ends on October 31st (or the last operating day in October) with the final report due to the State Agency by November 15th (7 CFR 245.6a(c)(1)). The SFA gave households a deadline of November 15th to submit documentation for verification of their application which resulted in receiving documentation for two families after the November 15th report had been filed. The households were notified that their benefits would be changed to paid due to no response on November 15th, and a second corrected notice was sent out November 17th with their updated benefit based on the documentation provided. This resulted in the verification report needing to be corrected.

CAP: Complete the verification training on the CNP Learning Portal and upload a certificate of completion. Complete the NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Plan document outlining a plan for how verification will be completed within the required timeframe to allow households time to submit documentation and the SFA time to submit the required report.

Date of CAP Completion: February 14, 2024; Completed February 6, 2023

Response: The FSD uploaded a certificate of completion for the verification training, and an NSLP corrective action form with the procedure for verification. The verification procedure outlines a timeline to follow for verification with a deadline for households to submit documentation by the end of October to give the SFA time to complete the Verification report by November 15th.

Finding 4 – Professional Standards

School Foodservice Authority staff who interact with program applicants or participants (i.e. Cafeteria staff, Free and Reduced Application approval staff) and their supervisors, as well as the Hearing Official, must have annual civil rights training (FNS Instruction 113). The training logs showed the civil rights training had been completed by the hearing official and the confirming official, but no back up documentation was kept.

CAP: Upload an agenda and sign in sheet certifying the hearing official and confirming official completed the civil rights training video.

Date of CAP Completion: February 14, 2023; Completed January 10, 2024

Response: The FSD had the hearing official and confirming official sign the agenda and sign in sheet certifying that they completed the training on the date that they tracked in their professional standards training tracking log. The SA reviewed this while on-site.

Finding 5 – Professional Standards

Per 7 CFR 210.30(b)(1)(v), Food Service Directors must have at least eight hours of food safety training at least every five years. A free, online course, Food Safety in Schools is available through the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) and can be used to meet this requirement.

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CAP: Upload a training certificate indicating successful completion of at least eight hours food safety training into MyIdahoCNP (MICNP).

Date of CAP Completion: February 14, 2024; Completed February 6, 2024

Response: The FSD completed 8 hours of food safety training and uploaded a certificate of completion.

Finding 6 – Meal Components and Quantities - Breakfast

For the week of menu review, the K-6 lunch menu did not meet the minimum daily and weekly requirements for fruit. The federal regulations require minimum daily amounts of fruit for breakfast. The daily minimum of 1 cup was not met on Wednesday, 12/13/23 for grades K-6. The federal regulations require minimum weekly amounts for fruit. The weekly minimum of 5 cups was not met for grades K-6 (7 CFR 210.10).

CAP: Provide documentation to demonstrate that the menu findings are now corrected. This documentation may include menus, production records, nutrition facts labels, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and recipes.

Date of CAP Completion: Due December 15, 2023; Completed December 7, 2023

Response: The FSD added juice and an orange to the menu and submitted a revised menu and production records showing the fruit requirement is now being met.

Finding 7 – Meal Components and Quantities - Lunch

For the week of menu review, the K-6 lunch menu did not meet the minimum daily requirements for fruit. The federal regulations require a minimum of 1/2 cup of fruit to be offered each day for grades K-6. This requirement was not met on Tuesday, 12/12/23. (7 CFR 210.10)

CAP: Provide documentation to demonstrate that the menu findings are now corrected. This documentation may include menus, production records, nutrition facts labels, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and recipes.

Date of CAP Completion: Due December 15, 2023; Completed December 7, 2023

Response: The FSD added an additional kiwi to the menu and submitted a revised menu and production records showing the fruit requirement is now being met.

COMMENDATIONS

- The FSD was very attentive, prepared, and willing to implement the changes the SA recommended. The school staff members were quick to answer questions and help find the information the SA asked for.
- The Wellness Policy and procedures set up to support it are well thought out and thorough. It's clear that this is a priority for Future Public Charter School.
- The Food Service staff at the Boys and Girls club was very pleasant when serving the meals. The person at the Point of Service was friendly with the students and handled the POS admirably.

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

Certification and Benefit Issuance

- The LEA (not the computer system) is ultimately responsible for determining eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. The LEA must ensure their computer system meets all requirements and performs all functions as outlined in this guidance with a high degree of accuracy. The determining official may sign or initial and date a separate sheet of paper that could then be attached to a batch of applications. Alternatively, the official may make a note to the electronic file. [Page 72 Eligibility Manual for School Meals]

Meal Components and Quantities

- Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following TA:
 - During the Administrative Review the results of the menu review were provided to the sponsor in a detailed Menu Review Results Report. Recommendations were included to bring all areas into compliance. All menus served must meet all daily and weekly meal pattern requirements for the specific grade group. The sponsor was encouraged to provide training as needed to ensure compliance. Please note that per USDA guidance any repeat menu findings in future Administrative Reviews may result in fiscal action.
 - The Child Nutrition (CN) Label submitted for the Sunny Fresh Scrambled Eggs was not legible. The CN number was verified as active on the USDA CN Label Verification Report.

Civil Rights

- There were a large number of applications submitted that were denied or from households that have been directly certified. Based on the excess number of applications submitted, there may be an unnecessary push for households to complete applications even though a family does not qualify. Besides being an unnecessary use of resources and time for the approver, it is not allowable (page 76 of the Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual 2017). The practice of schools requiring or monitoring meal applications must stop, or this may lead to an escalation to a finding in future reviews.

Food Safety

- Each SFA is required to purchase domestic agricultural commodities or products that are produced and processed substantially in the United States or territories, as applicable (7 CFR 210.21 (d)). (LIST PRODUCTS) If a product from another country is sourced, then the food service must have proof that the domestic product is significantly higher in price or not available in sufficient quantities. Include the Buy American Provision in SFA solicitation documents for the purchase of commercial foods. Products must be checked upon receipt and not accepted if the products do not comply with the Buy American Provision unless there is documentation to justify the exception (exorbitant pricing or

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product shortages). The letter from Charlie's Produce is insufficient. There needs to be a Buy American Exception Form for each product. Mushrooms are produced in the US, so annual documentation is not applicable to mushrooms.

FISCAL ACTION

Due to benefit issuance and verification errors, fiscal action results in \$4.00 for NSLP and \$1.88 for SBP. However, since this amount falls under the \$600 threshold, the fiscal action will be disregarded, and no financial adjustment will occur.

YOUR REVIEW IS NOW CLOSED.

If you wish to discuss any of these findings, please contact me at (208) 332-6820.

Thank you for your continued support of the Child Nutrition Programs.

Sincerely,

Cambria Steffler

Cambria Steffler, MS, RD
NSLP Coordinator

cc: Lynda Westphal, MHS, SNS, Director, Idaho Child Nutrition Programs
Lauren Tassos, Child Nutrition Director, Future Public Charter School

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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

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