



# Idaho Department of Education

April 30, 2024

Dr. Pat Charlton  
Jerome School District  
125 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West  
Jerome, ID 83338

Dear Superintendent Charlton,

On February 27, 2024, Idaho Department of Education Coordinators Cassandra Thompson and Cambria Steffler conducted an Administrative Review (AR) of Jerome School District for the following United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP) Operating Provision 2 breakfast option
- USDA Foods
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) – Summit Elementary

The sites reviewed were Summit Elementary and Falls City Academy.

The State agency (SA) would like to commend Vanessa Fitzsimons and the entire staff of Jerome School District 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

**Debbie Critchfield, Superintendent of Public Instruction**

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- 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

One application was denied incorrectly due to an income calculation error. The application was validated as a paid benefit but should be a free benefit.

**CAP:** Change student benefits from paid to free immediately. Upload an updated benefit issuance list showing the corrected benefit.

**Due Date:** March 14, 2024, Completed March 6, 2024

**Response:** The Food Service Director (FSD) corrected the error by changing the student to free. A benefit issuance list was uploaded to document the correction was made.

### Finding 2 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following:*

During the review, the importance of signage was discussed with the SFA. The SFA must ensure that signage is posted near or at the beginning of the serving line identifying what constitutes a reimbursable meal [7 CFR 210.10(a)(2)].

**CAP:** Provide a written statement that meal signage has been posted.

**Due Date:** February 5, 2024; completed February 5, 2024

**Response:** The appropriate signage in English and Spanish for both breakfast and lunch, were posted at the beginning of the serving line identifying what constitutes a reimbursable meal.

### Finding 3 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following:*

For the week of menu review, the 9-12 lunch menu did not meet the minimum daily and weekly requirements for fruit. The federal regulations require a minimum of 1 cup of fruit to be offered each day for grades 9-12. This requirement was not met on January 10, 2024.

- A whole fresh orange was served on Wednesday. The Food Buying Guide indicates, a whole fresh orange is creditable at only 1/2 cup fruit. Consider adding a banana, or 1/2 cup canned peaches with this meal, to meet the 1 cup daily fruit requirement.
- By following the suggestions above, both the daily and weekly requirements will be met.

**CAP:**

- Provide a written statement that the daily and weekly fruit requirements are now met. Include a detailed statement to describe what specific changes were made to the menu, for the week of review, to correct all menu review findings and bring the menu into compliance.

- Submit supporting documentation to demonstrate that the menu findings listed under the previous step are now corrected. This documentation may include menus, production records, nutrition fact labels, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and recipes. Reference the menu review results report for specific details and suggestions to bring the menu into compliance.
- Submit the position title(s) of the SFA representative(s) that will oversee this area and ensure future compliance.

**Due Date:** February 5, 2024; completed February 5, 2024

**Response:** The FSD uploaded a new production record for January 10, 2024, which reflected an additional 1/2 cup canned fruit to go with the fresh orange. A total of 1 cup of fruit has been offered. Supporting documentation was uploaded into MyIdahoCNP. This CAP was approved by CN Resource on February 6, 2024.

#### **Finding 4 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch**

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following:*

For the week of menu review, the 9-12 lunch menu did not meet the minimum daily requirements for grain. The federal regulations require menus to be planned that meet the minimum daily 2-ounce equivalent grain requirement for grades 9-12. This requirement was not met on January 8, 2024, and January 9, 2024.

- The 51-gram whole grain hamburger bun served on Monday and Tuesday credits for 1.75 ounces of grain. Consider serving a bun that is 56 grams or more to meet the requirement of 2-ounce equivalent grain.

**CAP:**

- Provide a written statement that the daily grains requirements are now met. Include a detailed statement to describe what specific changes were made to the menu, for the week of review, to correct all menu review findings and bring the menu into compliance.
- Submit supporting documentation to demonstrate that the menu findings listed under the previous step are now corrected. This documentation may include menus, production records, nutrition facts labels, CN labels, and recipes. Reference the menu review results report for specific details and suggestions to bring the menu into compliance.
- Submit the position title(s) of the SFA representative(s) that will oversee this area and ensure future compliance.

**Due Date:** February 5, 2024; completed February 5, 2024

**Response:** The sponsor uploaded the Product Formulation Statement (PFS) and nutrition labels for the hamburger bun. This reflects the minimum 2oz eq grain required for grades 9-12. Supporting documentation was uploaded into MyIdahoCNP. This CAP was approved by CN Resource on February 6, 2024.

#### **Finding 5 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch**

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following:*

For the week of menu review, the 9-12 lunch menu did not meet the minimum weekly

requirement for the dark green vegetable subgroup. Dark green vegetables were offered, but not in large enough quantities to meet the weekly requirement. Subgroups of vegetables must be met for each grade group. The 1/2 cup weekly dark green vegetable subgroup requirement was not met for grades 9-12. Consider the following suggestions to help meet requirements:

- Increasing the 1/4 cup of the broccoli served on January 8, 2024, to 1/2 cup, to meet the 1/2 cup weekly dark green vegetable subgroup requirement.
- Serving 1 cup only romaine lettuce, instead of the romaine and iceberg mix on January 12, 2024, to meet the 1/2 cup weekly dark green vegetable subgroup requirement.

**CAP:**

- Provide a written statement that the dark green vegetable subgroup requirements are now met. Include a detailed statement to describe what specific changes were made to the menu, for the week of review, to correct all menu review findings and bring the menu into compliance.
- Submit supporting documentation to demonstrate that the menu findings listed under the previous step are now corrected. This documentation may include menus, production records, nutrition facts labels, CN labels, and recipes. Reference the menu review results report for specific details and suggestions to bring the menu into compliance.
- Submit the position title(s) of the SFA representative(s) that will oversee this area and ensure future compliance.

**Due Date:** February 5, 2024; completed February 5, 2024

**Response:** Due to unforeseen circumstances (weather related snow day), credit was given for the ½ cup romaine lettuce that was on the menu. Please make sure the production record reflects that the romaine lettuce would have been offered. Adding the additional ½ cup Romaine on January 12, 2024, now shows that the dark green vegetable subgroup has been met. Supporting documentation was uploaded into MyIdahoCNP. This was approved by CN Resource on February 5, 2024.

### **Finding 6 – Local School Wellness Policy**

Per 7 CFR 210.31(e)(2), LEAs must assess their wellness policy at least once every three years on the extent to which schools are in compliance with the district policy, the extent to which the local wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local wellness policy. LEAs must make this assessment available to the public in an easily understood manner (7 CFR 210.31(d)(3)).

**CAP:** Upload a plan identifying who at the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) will be responsible for completing the triennial assessment(s), how the assessment(s) will be completed, what steps will be taken to ensure this requirement is met on a triennial basis, and how this assessment will be made available to the public in an easily understood manner.

**Due Date:** March 14, 2024; completed March 12, 2024

**Response:** The FSD uploaded a copy of a NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form that documents the Wellness Policy process. This process will ensure the Wellness Policy is reviewed/updated on a triennial basis, as well as available on their website for the public to review.

### Finding 7 – Smart Snacks

As per 7 CFR210.11, the school should have knowledge of and keep a written record of food sales that occur within the school day, but outside of food service. Only foods sold in school and intended for consumption during the school day (from midnight until 30 minutes after the end of school) fall under Smart Snacks regulations. Smart Snacks information and resources, including a sample site tracking form, can be found at the Idaho SDE CNP Smart Snacks website.

**CAP:** Create a fundraiser tracking form; you may refer to download forms in MyIdahoCNP to utilize the provided sample tracking form. Also, complete the NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form to indicate a plan moving forward to ensure fundraisers are appropriately tracked.

**Due Date:** March 14, 2024; completed March 12, 2024

**Response:** The FSD uploaded an NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form that included the utilization of a fundraiser tracking sheet as part of their new process. The procedure form also indicates the Assistant Superintendent, as well as principals of each school are responsible to ensure procedures are followed district wide. This new process was implemented in March 2024.

### COMMENDATIONS

- The FSD has excellent documentation in the school districts Buy American folder. The documentation includes the Buy American Provision Exception documentation worksheet for each non-domestic item, as well as pricing documents to show the cost of the domestic commodity or product is significantly higher than the non-domestic commodity or product. Your detailed records are outstanding!
- The food service staff were very receptive to the technical assistance provided by the SA. They were quick to answer questions and implement any changes. The SA appreciates the SFA's willingness to contemplate the 'why' behind our suggestions.
- The FSD was very organized and well prepared for the review. The FSD has excellent processes in place to maintain documentation. We were especially impressed with your professional standards, Buy American and verification folders. With this being your first year as food service director, you are doing amazing work. Great job!

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

#### Certification and Benefit Issuance

- Three applications had zero income listed. The SA shared that this is a good opportunity to contact the family to verify zero income as well as provide information regarding community services that could have a positive impact for these families.
- Two applications had duplicate names of family members listed that resulted in the number of total household members being incorrect on the application. The SA advised the family members listed should always match the quantity listed in the total household members' box. Please review this TA with the appropriate team members.
- Four applications had errors (did not add child's income, frequency of pay not clear on application, incorrect income totals were calculated, a second income was not included

during calculation). All four applications did not impact assigned benefits. The SA requested the errors be reviewed by the team.

### **Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch**

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following TA:*

- A CN Label or PFS can be used to determine how processed food items contribute to the meal pattern. Without this documentation it may be difficult to determine if the meal component was satisfied.
  - A sponsor must maintain current product documentation and nutrition facts labels from the manufacturer for commercially prepared foods. Documentation should be no more than 5 years old.

### **Meal Components and Quantities - Breakfast**

*Independent contractor CN Resource completed the menu review and provided the following TA:*

- The items served did not always match what was planned to be offered, per communication with the sponsor. Fresh fruit was on the menu for January 8, 2024; however, fruit juice was served instead.

### **RMCR – Paid Lunch Equity**

- Consistent with 7 CFR 210.14(e)(4)(i), SFAs are not required to raise their paid lunch price by more than 10 cents from what was charged the previous year. SFAs can still choose to raise the price by more than 10 cents. The target weighted average lunch price for SY 2023-2024 is \$3.56. The SA recommends evaluating the current paid lunch prices in preparation for increasing prices for SY 2024-2025.

### **Food Safety**

- The reviewer discussed with the SFA that it would be helpful to have the HACCP Manual and Standard Operating Procedures (for their specific site) translated into Spanish to accommodate the Spanish speaking food service employee.

### **Resource Management**

- A Resource Management Capital Expenditure request must be submitted for a single piece of equipment over the \$5,000 threshold. Purchases must not be made until the SA has approved the request. [SP39-2016]
- The acquisition costs must also be included in the request which includes installation and freight which may bring the cost of the item over the \$5,000 threshold requiring a capital expenditure request submission.

### **Civil Rights**

- Ensure the Civil Rights complaint log is dated annually, with a new log started each year. If no complaints were received during the school year, write "no complaints" on the log at the end of the school year and retain the documentation for three years plus the current year. Writing "no complaints" documents what occurred during the school year and helps to ensure the integrity of your records.

## **FISCAL ACTION**

Due to benefit issuance errors, fiscal action results in \$8.66. 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,

*C. Thompson*

Cassandra Thompson, BS  
NSLP Coordinator

cc: Lynda Westphal, MHS, SNS, Director, Idaho Child Nutrition Programs  
Vanessa Fitzsimons, Child Nutrition Director, Jerome School District

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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](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

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