



Idaho Department of Education

June 13, 2024

Sherry Ann Adams, Superintendent
Melba School District #136
6870 Stokes Lane
Melba, ID 83641

Dear Superintendent Adams,

On October 19, 2023, Idaho Department of Education Coordinators Cassandra Thompson and Cambria Steffler conducted an Administrative Review (AR) of Melba School District for the following United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- USDA Foods

The site reviewed was Melba Elementary School.

The State agency (SA) would like to commend Irina Feoktistov and the entire staff of Melba 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
- Performance Standard 2: Meal Pattern and Nutritional Quality

Debbie Critchfield, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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- 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 USDA nondiscrimination statement (NDS) must accompany any printed and web-based materials referencing FNS programs. Web pages associated with program operation should list the full USDA NDS with details on participants' right to file a complaint. The non-discrimination statement (NDS) is not included on household notification letters. Update template letters to include the correct full NDS. The correct USDA NDS statement can be located on the SA website. The SA provides template letters, available in Download Forms, which can be utilized.

CAP: Update all template letters, including eligibility, DC notification, verification, and adverse action letters, to include the correct NDS. Upload copies of all new letters for SA review.

Due Date: November 3, 2023; completed October 26, 2023

Response: The requested template letters, including eligibility, DC notification, verification and adverse action letters were uploaded to MyIdahoCNP. The SA ensured the full NDS was included in all requested letters.

Finding 2 – Certification and Benefit Issuance

A statistical sample of 130 applications resulted in a 4.5% error rate. Six applications impacting nine students had income issues or were not changed to paid after carryover ended. These students should be changed to a paid benefit immediately.

CAP: A request was made to the Food Service Director to upload supporting documentation for the nine students that had benefit issuance errors. This documentation needs to state the date benefits were changed from free to paid, or reduced to paid, for each student after carryover ended.

Due Date: October 25, 2023; extended to December 1, 2023; completed November 29, 2023, requested further information on March 15, 2024; completed April 25, 2024

Response: The Food Service Directed uploaded applications, a benefit issuance list, as well as other documentation supporting the actual date that benefits were changed to paid. This documentation allowed the SA to compare the applications to the benefit issuance list, to confirm dates of change in eligibility.

Finding 3 – 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]. Ensure the "For Official Use Only" portion of

applications is completed including a signature and date of determination. While reviewing applications, it was noted that all paper applications did not have the "For Official Use Only" section completed or the determining official's signature.

CAP: Develop a plan for how applications will be determined, including who will determine the applications, when applications will be determined, and when another confirmation review will be conducted.

Due Date: December 1, 2023; completed November 29, 2023

Response: The Food Service Director completed and uploaded the NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form. The FSD is responsible for determining eligibility for all applications. This includes ensuring the "For Official Use Only" portion of the application will be completed, including a signature and date of determination. A confirmation review will be conducted for all denied applications and applications selected for verification.

Finding 4 – Meal Counting and Claiming

The SFA is mandated to produce and maintain daily meal counts for each school site under the SFA to ensure the accuracy for the monthly claim for reimbursement (7 CFR 210.8). While the SA was reviewing the meal counting and claiming documents, it was noted that the POS software has the school sites within the SFA combined. However, the school sites are separated in the state's claim for reimbursement. The Edit Check reports produced from the SFA's POS are combined monthly and do not break down the daily meal counts by school. This process results in a higher probability of human error and led your claim for September to not match your daily counts. The following errors were found in the month of review:

- Overclaiming Free Meals
- Overclaiming Reduced Meals
- Overclaiming Paid Meals

CAP: Contact your POS to separate your school sites in the software. If the school sites are unable to be separated, contact the SA to combine the sites in MyIdahoCNP for the claim for reimbursement.

Due Date: December 1, 2023; completed January 5, 2024

Response: The Food Service Director provided the SA with documentation that Melba Elementary and Melba Jr/Sr High School are now separated in their software. This action will help ensure the element of human error is diminished.

Finding 5 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch

For the week of menu review, the grade 6 lunch menu did not meet the whole grain-rich requirements. At least 80% of the grains offered weekly must be whole grain-rich to meet requirements. The menu met 72.73% whole grains for the week of review for grade 6.

CAP:

1. Provide a written statement that the whole grain-rich 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.
2. 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, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and recipes. Reference the menu review results report for specific details and suggestions to bring the menu into compliance.

3. Submit the position title(s) of the School Food Authority representative(s) that will oversee this area and ensure future compliance.

Due Date: October 26, 2023; completed October 30, 2023

Response: The updated production record shows the serving size of spaghetti for grade 6 was reduced to 1 cup. This increased the whole grain rich percentage to meet the 80% requirement. The Food Service Director uploaded an updated production record documenting the change made to bring the menu in compliance. CNP approved the response on October 31, 2023.

Finding 6 – Meal Components and Quantities – Lunch

For the week of menu review, the K-5 & 6 lunch menus did not meet the minimum weekly requirement for the starchy vegetable subgroup. Starchy 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 ½ cup weekly starchy vegetable subgroup requirement was not met for grades K-5, with only 1/4 cup offered.
 - The ½ cup weekly starchy vegetable subgroup requirement was not met for grade 6, with only 3/8 cup offered.

CAP:

1. Provide a written statement that the starchy 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.
2. 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, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and recipes. Reference the menu review results report for specific details and suggestions to bring the menu into compliance.
3. Submit the position title(s) of the School Food Authority representative(s) that will oversee this area and ensure future compliance.

Due Date: October 26, 2023; completed on October 26, 2023

Response: The updated production record shows that the serving size of tots was increased to 8 pieces for grades K-6 to credit as 1/2 cup starchy vegetable and meets the weekly requirement. The Food Service Director uploaded production records to reflect this change and bring the meal into compliance.

Finding 7 – On Site Monitoring

According to 7 CFR 210.8 (a)(1) and 7 CFR 220.11 (d)(1), each SFA with two or more feeding sites must perform no less than one on-site review of the meal counting and claiming system and the readily observable general areas of review identified under 7 CFR 210.18(h) in each school operating NSLP and 50% of schools operating SBP under its jurisdiction prior to February 1, each school year. The review occurred within the required timeframe; however, the form

was not completed in its entirety. Both sites are missing the required signatures at the end of the form.

CAP: Complete the corrective action plan for how the SFA on-site monitoring form will be completed in the future, including who will conduct the monitoring, sign the review forms and when the monitoring will take place.

Due Date: November 3, 2023; completed October 31, 2023

Response: The Food Service Director uploaded the completed NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form in the SNP Reviews Attachment List. The FSD is the responsible party to ensure Onsite Monitoring will occur each school year prior to February 1. The onsite monitoring will be completed by the FSD with the assistance of other staff members when necessary. The FSDs, as well as any other staff member involved with onsite monitoring, will sign the onsite monitoring form.

Finding 8 – 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 LEA 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: December 1, 2023; completed December 1, 2023

Response: The Food Service Director uploaded a completed NSLP Corrective Action Procedure Form into MyIdahoCNP. The Melba SD Superintendent is responsible for the completion of the triennial assessment. The assessment will be completed during leadership meetings with input from the FSD. After completion of the triennial assessment, it will be uploaded to the school district's website for the public to view.

Finding 9 – Local School Wellness Policy

The LWP was found to be out of compliance. During the previous review, a finding was issued for a noncompliant policy and although it appears that the LEA did address the finding and updated the policy in 2018, they have not provided to the public documentation of periodic reviews of the policy. For more information on local wellness policy requirements, visit the SA's [School Wellness](#) webpage.

CAP: Upload a plan identifying who at the LEA will be responsible to ensure the LWP is compliant with Federal regulations, how the policy will be updated, and when a compliant policy will be available to the public.

Due Date: October 26, 2023; completed October 26, 2023

Response: The Food Service Director uploaded a CAP into MyIdahoCNP. This satisfied the corrective action above.

Finding 10 – Professional Standards

The United States Department of Agriculture has established minimum Professional Standards for school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (7 CFR 210.30). The standards provide annual training requirements for all school nutrition professionals. It is required that some form of documentation be kept on file to show Professional Standards compliance. The FSD does maintain training tracking logs for all employees but did not have documentation of her training. Employee training tracking Logs must include the key area/topics and training subjects completed with certificates, agendas, and sign-in sheets retained for backup. The SA has made available a template tracking log prompting this information and Professional Standards Learning Objectives and Topics with Codes which can be found on the [USDA Professional Standards Website](#)

CAP: Complete a professional standards training tracking log for all completed training in SY23-24 for the Food Service Director. Upload this training tracking log to MyIdahoCNP.

Due Date: November 3, 2023; completed October 31, 2023

Response: A training tracking log was completed by the FSD and uploaded into MyIdahoCNP. The FSD will utilize this tracking form moving forward.

Finding 11 – Professional Standards

Only teachers, secretaries, custodians, and volunteers can complete Civil Rights training using the Frontline Staff handout. All foodservice staff, determining, confirming, verifying, and hearing officials, and their supervisors must watch the full video training. Civil rights training must occur at the beginning of each school year and be ongoing as necessary, including within 30 days of hire for any new employees. No documentation was provided for the hearing or confirming official.

CAP: Have the hearing official and confirming official complete the online civil rights video training. Upload an agenda and sign in sheet to MyIdahoCNP. A sign in sheet can be found in section 2 of Download Forms.

Due Date: December 1, 2023; completed November 29, 2023

Response: The FSD uploaded an agenda and sign-in sheet to confirm the hearing official and confirming official completed the online civil rights video training. An agenda and sign in sheet were also uploaded to MyIdahoCNP with signatures stating attendance/completion for all missing individuals.

Finding 12 – RMCR: Nonprofit School Food Service Account

A 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]

CAP: Enter a capital expenditure request in MyIdahoCNP for the steamer with all requested quotes. Submit a written plan describing how capital expenditure requests will be managed when a single piece of equipment is needed.

Due Date: December 1, 2023; completed October 31, 2023

Response: The SFA submitted a capital expenditure request on September 5, 2023, with 2 quotes. On November 1, 2023, the CAP was uploaded noting that the FSD will be sure to submit

a capital expenditure request for items over \$5,000 plus 3 quotes from vendors prior to awarding the bid.

COMMENDATIONS

- It was pleasant to see the principal from Melba Elementary assisting in the cafeteria/kitchen, serving milk and participating in the meal service. This interaction assists in approachability for the students if they have a need to interact with the principal during the school day. It was nice to witness the positive conversations the principal had with students as she assisted the food service team. This was impressive to witness!
- The SA recognized the cleanliness of both the cafeteria and kitchen areas. The kitchen is very organized, and the dry storage area, refrigerators and freezer were compliant with food safety regulations. Also, the cafeteria had all the required signage that is necessary to be in compliance. Great job!
- The Food Service Director and her team were extremely accommodating. The SA witnessed their contagious smiles as they interacted with all students. This creates a friendly environment that is pleasant for the students as they enjoy their meals. The staff was knowledgeable and comfortable in their respective roles, which resulted in a streamlined meal service for breakfast and lunch that the SA observed. Nice work!

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

SFA On Site Monitoring

- The SFA completed both the breakfast and lunch on-site review on the same review form. Ideally, separate forms will be utilized for each of these separate breakfast and lunch reviews, but the SA has allowed the same form to be used for both meal observations if different colored pens are used to document and separate the responses for each review.

RMCR: Revenue From Nonprogram Foods

- The Non-Profit Revenue Tool must show food cost percentages being above the industry standard of 40%. Use USDA Memo SP20-2016 for guidance.
- The NPFR is out of compliance. The SFA is charging less for A La Carte items than it costs to procure the food items.
- The State agency must ensure that all non-reimbursable foods sold by the school food service, including, but not limited to, a la carte food items, adult meals, and vended meals, generate at least the same proportion of school food authority revenues as they contribute to school food authority food costs, as required in § 210.14(f).

School Breakfast and SFSP Outreach

- When operating free Provision 2 breakfast, additional promotion should support that breakfast is available everyday free of charge. The monthly breakfast menu would also

be a good place to remind participants and their families that breakfast is available at no cost.

- SFAs must cooperate with Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors to distribute materials to inform families of the availability and location of free SFSP meals for students when school is not in session [7 CFR 210.12 (d)(2)]. SFAs should promote locating summer meal locations by advertising the Summer Meal Site Finder (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids>) or texting the word “FOOD” or “COMIDA”; to 304-304 to see nearby options. Best practice is to include SFSP promotion and ways to locate meals on the SFA’s website.

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 submitted production records did not provide adequate information. It is a requirement of the federal regulations to maintain complete and accurate production records.
 - At least 80% of grains offered must be whole grain-rich to meet requirements. The menu met 72.73% whole grains for the week of review for grade 6. Increase the amount of whole grain-rich products offered to at least 80% of the weekly grain offerings.

Local School Wellness Policy

- Federal legislation requires school districts to implement a local wellness policy that must include language:
 - Permitting parents, students, school board, PE teachers, school health professionals, school food service staff, administrators, and community members to participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the local wellness policy.
 - Identifying wellness policy leadership of one or more LEA and/or school official(s) who have the authority and responsibility to ensure each school complies with the wellness policy.
 - Specifying measurable goals for nutrition education, nutrition promotion, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness that are written with consideration for evidence-based strategies.
 - Address nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold on the school campus during the school day and for providing school meals that adhere to Federal meal pattern requirements.
 - Identifying nutrition standards for non-sold foods and beverages available during classroom and school celebrations.

- Stating a policy for food and beverage marketing that allows the marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

FISCAL ACTION

Due to benefit issuance errors and Meal Counting and Claiming errors (NSLP \$3,883.20 and SBP \$657.65), fiscal action resulted in \$4,540.85. This adjustment will be withheld from a future claim. Should you wish to appeal this fiscal action, follow the appeal procedures on the [State Agency Appeal Procedures](#) document located on the Idaho Child Nutrition Programs website.

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
Irina Feoktistov, Food Service Director

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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

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