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## Direct Certification Changes, Upgrades and Updates

Direct Certification has been through many changes in the past years. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 required all states to establish a system of Direct Certification of school age Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants over a three year phase-in and mandatory for all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) by School Year (SY) 2008-2009.

In the years since the mandate additional implementation requirements have been introduced with the intent to increase Direct Certification effectiveness. In August 2010, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food Nutrition Service (FNS) implemented policy to extend categorical eligibility for free meals to all children in households of those receiving assistance from SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In SY 2011-2012 Direct Certification was required to be performed three times per year increasing the original once per year mandate.

The Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act of 2010, (HHFKA) required states to meet certain Direct Certification SNAP performance targets. For SY 2012-2013 states that failed to achieve a Direct Certification rate of at least 90 percent were required to develop and implement Continuous Improvement Plans. That target would later increase to 95 percent for SY 2013-2014 and beyond. Moving towards this goal Missouri applied and received grant funds to make improvements to the Direct Certification methods being used. The Direct Certification system substantially reduces the need for household applications and requires no action by the student’s parent or guardians.

Direct Certification for public LEAs matches SNAP and TANF records against student enrollment lists through the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) Identification system for public LEAs from a file provided by Department of Social Services (DSS). This system was available for public LEAs during SY 2013-2014. The report displays students determined to be eligible with a 94% or greater match rate between the MOSIS ID System and DSS. Direct Certification Look up Report (Near Match Students) was created to display students with 88-93% match rate between the MOSIS ID System and DSS. This rate is not a high enough match for the Department to determine if the student is a match to those students uploaded by the LEA. The LEA would review and determine if the student is considered a match. This was created to increase the match of eligible students.

The Zip Code Direct Certification file is also provided for non-public LEAs. DSS provides a list with all those eligible for SNAP and TANF. Non-public LEAs continue to use the Zip Code Direct Certification file but the process was simplified from a 43 step process to 5 steps. The Direct Certification file generates all those eligible who reside in the Zip Codes listed by the LEA.

Both the MOSIS ID System and the Zip Code file continued to upgrade. September 2014 the Direct Certification updated list was available monthly. September 2015 the Direct Certification lists were updated and provided on a weekly basis. January 2016 a match date of eligibility was added. Social Security Numbers (SSN) were displayed entirely to only showing the last four digits and eventually in February 2016 SSN were removed from the Direct Certification list completely. Foster students were added to the Direct Certification list in February 2016. Foster Students can now be identified eligible for free meals from the Direct Certification list and no longer need to complete the household application.

In order to help achieve the recognized 95% Direct Certification SNAP rate, additional edits were added to the Verification Report. It is extremely important to report accurate SNAP direct certified students on the Verification Report. The number reported on the Verification Report is used to determine the Missouri SNAP Direct Certification rate.

The continuous efforts of Direct Certification have helped to increase the mandatory SNAP match rate and benefit more students with free meal eligibility. The match rates of SNAP eligible students have increased over the years as follows:

2007-08 - 63%	2011-12 - 72%
2008-09 - 67%	2012-13 - 80%
2009-10 - 66%	2013-14 - 86% (first year for MOSIS) – this is the last published year
2010-11 - 70%	

Missouri strives to continue to increase the percentage of those SNAP matched to receive free meals through the Direct Certification Process to reach the USDA FNS goal of 95%.



CSI trainings are held during spring break and summer. Stay tuned for the announcement of summer 2016 training!

## CSI: Planting Seeds of Change in School Nutrition

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Culinary Skills Institute (CSI), is celebrating its second year of training school nutrition professionals. To date, three CSI trainings have taken place reaching 57 school food service personnel from 17 counties across the State of Missouri.

The mission of CSI is to support nutrition environments in schools by enhancing the culinary skills and knowledge of school food professionals. The 2 ½ day, hands-on, training takes place in a culinary lab where participants prepare kid-tested, standardized recipes that meet the nutrition standards required in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Moving forward, trainings will combine the Healthy Cuisine for

Kids curriculum from the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) with increased information on teamwork and local, seasonal products.

DHSS relies on strong partnerships with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Missouri School Nutrition Association (MSNA) to provide a well-rounded culinary skills education opportunity. This year CSI added the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) to the partnership to provide Farm to School information.

The labs are led by a Nutrition Specialist and a Chef with the following topics offered:

- Culinary basics: knife skills, mise en place and benefits of being organized and, presentation techniques

- Nutrition basics
- Recipe preparation, taste-testing, and evaluation
- Seasonal and local menu ideas

Trainings are held during spring break and summer to accommodate a kitchen staff's schedule. The 2016 spring break training is full. However, there is a summer training scheduled in Columbia, July 25-27. Look for an email blast from DESE in May announcing open registration for the summer 2016 training.

Interested individuals can go to CSI online at [www.health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/culinaryskills/](http://www.health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/culinaryskills/) or contact Lisa. Farmer@health.mo.gov, (p) 913-636-1073.

## SUMMER MEAL PROGRAMS 2016!

Spring has sprung and the time is now for LEAs to begin enrolling in summer meal programs for its student population. Summer food programs, such as those offered by our schools help address a food insecurity that exists in our communities. There are three meal programs available as options to LEAs offering a food program in congruent with an educational program during the summer:

- The regular **National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) and . . .**
- **The Seamless Summer Option (SSO).** Both of these programs are administered by Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Food and Nutrition Services.

- **The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** is administered by the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).

For starters, LEAs choosing regular **NSLP/SBP** can proceed under its current LEA application which is effective through June 30, 2016. The application includes both regular and summer meals. Should summer school proceed past June 30, 2016 a new LEA application must be completed for the new school year 2016-2017.

LEAs interested in enrolling or learning more about the SSO option as coordinated by DESE, FNS are best served by contacting the Department directly at 573.751.3526 and web link is: <http://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/food-nutrition-services/feeding-children-summer> .





# Missouri Team Nutrition Programs R 4 Schools!

Missouri Team Nutrition (TN) offers a variety of programs and resources for school nutrition programs. Sponsored by the Missouri DHSS, TN's main web site is [www.health.mo.gov/teamnutrition](http://www.health.mo.gov/teamnutrition). The following are programs currently available for schools:

## Culinary Skills Institute



- CSI, as already mentioned, is our culinary program for staff. Nutrition personnel are encouraged to visit the web link for updates on up and coming trainings.



- I Made A Rainbow at the Salad bar, otherwise known as Rainbow Days is a popular promotional event for elementary schools with salad bars.

Supplies, posters and \$200 stipends are provided.

## FreshLIFE

Enjoy a SALAD today!

- FreshLIFE: Enjoy a Salad Today! is the sister program to Rainbow Days offered at middle and high schools. Its own promotional materials, posters and supplies along with a \$200 stipend per school site with a salad bar are provided.



- Healthy Schools. Healthy Kids. Healthy Future. campaign offers a variety of school wellness resources such as handouts for parents on *Healthy Role Modeling*, *Healthy Snacks*, *School Wellness 101*, *Breakfast = Achievement* and

Recess before Lunch. It also offers a project report on lessons learned about *Engaging Missouri Parents into School Wellness* programs.

- Schools Taking Action for School Wellness is a sub-grant of up to \$1000 for schools or parent councils wishing to address activities on nutrition or physical activity. Deadline for submission is Friday, April 15, 2016 for summer programs.

### Questions/Assistance:

Alma Hopkins, Project Director,  
Missouri Team Nutrition in Schools  
[alma.hopkins@health.mo.gov](mailto:alma.hopkins@health.mo.gov)  
573.751.2342



Celebrate your school's lunch heroes on the first Friday in May!

Celebrate School Lunch Hero Day, May 6, 2016

School Nutrition Employee Week, May 9-13, 2016

Between preparing healthy meals for America's students, adhering to strict nutrition standards, navigating student food allergies and offering service with a smile, school nutrition professionals are true heroes!

School Lunch Hero Day is the perfect opportunity to recognize the hardworking professionals in school cafeterias.

Founded by Jarrett J. Krosoczka and author of the "Lunch Lady" book series, School Lunch Hero Day aims to recognize an important and influential person in his early school years. Jarrett created the Super Hero Lunch Lady to remind everyone—directors, managers, parents, students, and school staff—that school nutrition employees are superheroes that deserve some recognition.

The day aims to showcase the ways in which school nutrition professionals make a difference for every child who comes through the cafeteria. For ideas on ways to celebrate, gear and a customizable press release, go to [www.school lunch heroday.com](http://www.school lunch heroday.com)



# SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY™

# Pencil Us In! Summer Workshops 2016

DESE, FNS has announced its **Summer Workshop schedule for 2016**. FNS welcomes food service directors, managers and head cooks to set plans to attend! **Topics will cover the latest regulations and trends** and offer CEUs to help staff's professional standard requirements.

New locations and training dates have been added to these full day workshops throughout Missouri.

The schedule and online registration will be posted in [News and Updates](#) link or <http://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/food-nutrition-services/news-and-updates>.

For the present time, the scheduled dates and locations are as follows:

- **June 28**, Cape Girardeau Career and Tech Center, 1080 S Silver Springs Rd, Cape Girardeau, MO 63703
- **June 29 & 30**, St Louis, Rockwood School District, location to be determined
- **July 6**, Kirksville School District, 1515 Cottage Grove Ave, Kirksville, MO 63501
- **July 8**, Jefferson City, Blair Oaks Middle, 6124 Falcon Ln, Jefferson City, MO 65101
- **July 19**, St. Joe School District, location to be determined
- **July 20**, Kansas City, Grain Valley North Middle, 31608 NE Pink Hill Rd, Grain Valley, MO 64029
- **July 26**, Joplin, East Middle School, 4594 E. 20th St. Joplin, MO 65801
- **July 27 & 28**, Springfield, Kickapoo High School, 3710 S Jefferson Ave, Springfield, MO 65807

## Team Up for Success Training

The State of Missouri is hosting a "Team up for Success Training". We are looking for Food Service Professionals that are interested to participate as a mentor or as a participant. If you or if you know of anyone you think would like to participate, please submit their contact information to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) at [kevin.gorsage@dese.mo.gov](mailto:kevin.gorsage@dese.mo.gov) no later than COB Friday, April 1, 2016. This is an excellent opportunity for LEAs to work together to share their knowledge and expertise with other LEAs throughout the State. All LEAs are encouraged to submit their interest to participate in the training. The "Team up for Success Training" is an initiative to learn how your programs can be strengthened to meet the overall goal "Feed the Children a Healthy Meal". Below is information regarding the training.

After the Food Service Professionals have submitted their recommendations, Kevin Gorsage will send an email containing links to the participants and mentors with an application and additional information. The application will be used to gather information from the attendees and solicit their feedback on their areas of strengths and weaknesses. The attendees will prioritize their top three areas for learning into seven potential training areas: menu planning, financial management, reducing plate waste, increasing participation, food safety, Smart Snacks and special diet needs. The applications will be reviewed and the training will be tailored to the top three needs of the participants.

The "Team up for Success Training" is a tailored technical assistance, mentoring and training opportunity. Food Service Professionals will be selected as participants and mentors in a 3:1 ratio. Staff are not required to have the title of Food Service Director, but should have primary responsibility for supervising and managing the food service operations. Participation will be limited to one participant per LEA. There should be one mentor for every three participants.

The "Team up for Success Training" will be held in Jefferson City, Missouri, at The Capital Plaza Hotel. The training starts on Monday, May 23 with the mentors arriving for a dinner and meeting starting at 6:00 pm. Participants join the mentors for a meeting starting on Tuesday, May 24 and concluding Wednesday afternoon, May 25.

Travel will be paid for participants and mentors. The participants and mentors will need to pay for their hotel and meal expenses out of pocket and then will be able to submit a request for reimbursement of actual, documented hotel and meal cost based on the State Agency reimbursement rate. Hotel cost will be reimbursed for Monday, May 23 and Tuesday, May 24. The meeting will conclude at 3 pm on Wednesday, May 24.

If you have any question, please call our office at 573-751-3526 or email Kevin Gorsage at [Kevin.gorsage@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Kevin.gorsage@dese.mo.gov).

Food and Nutrition Services

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<http://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/food-nutrition-services>



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