



TENNESSEE
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Division of Resources and Support Services

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM
Administration Building / TPS
1240 Foster Avenue
Nashville, TN 37243-0389
615-532-4715 or 1-800-354-3663
FAX: 615-532-0362

March 20, 2009

Dear Supervisors of School Nutrition:

Federal legislation, Public Law 111-5, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides a one-time appropriation to Tennessee of \$2,275,738 for grants to school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for equipment assistance.

In order to provide a timely impact on the economy, we hope to notify SFAs no later than June 8, 2009 if they will receive a grant award. The funds will hopefully be dispersed no later than July 15, 2009. The dual goals of this grant are improving the program infrastructure and providing an economic stimulus. Therefore, we encourage the prompt purchase of the equipment. Unless an exception is granted by this office, all funds must be expended by September 30, 2009. If the entire amount of the grant is not spent, it must be refunded to the state.

Funding

The funding will be distributed via a competitive process that is fair and equitable. Funds received through this grant cannot be co-mingled with other program funds and must be tracked and reported separately.

SFA Application

The attached application must be submitted by the SFA per school, per piece of equipment. The request may include new equipment, renovation of equipment, or replacement of equipment. For these purposes equipment will be defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost of \$5,000. There are a few exceptions where the amount may be less than \$5,000: examples are milk coolers, refrigerated merchandisers, milk vending machines, kiosks to serve students in other areas of the school. No grants will be awarded for equipment less than \$1,500.

As with all federal grant funds, the equipment purchase(s) must be allowable and properly procured. Using these funds to purchase a walk in freezer for school nutrition use would be an allowable cost; however, renovation of the school nutrition area would fall under the category of construction costs which must be borne by the general fund.

Focus of the SFA Grants:

There are four areas of focus for equipment requests. You must choose one of these focuses and justify it for each piece of equipment requested.

Focus 1: Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school nutrition meals that meet the dietary guidelines (e.g., purchasing an equipment alternative to a deep fryer).

Focus 2: Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meal programs (e.g., cold/hot holding equipment, dishwashing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, blast chillers, etc.),

Focus 3: Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school nutrition operations (e.g. purchase of an energy-efficient walk-in freezer replacing an outdated, energy-demanding freezer),

Focus 4: Equipment that allows SFAs to support expanded participation in a school meal program (e.g., equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting or to better utilize cafeteria space).

School Selection Criteria

To be selected for this grant, your SFA must:

- Submit system summary with schools and equipment prioritized
- Submit one application per piece of equipment, per school
- Operate the National School Lunch Program
- Have 50 percent or more of its students eligible for free/reduced price meals
- Have the ability to spend the money within three months of receipt
- Justify the degree of need of the equipment
- Show current operating balance for the SFA
- Identify focus of the requested equipment

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How to Apply

Included with this announcement is an application to be completed by each SFA for each school that is to be considered for an equipment grant. You will not be able to complete the application until after you have submitted your February, 2009 Claim for Reimbursement. **Our office must have these applications no later than May 1, 2009.** Submit the application to the following: Mr. Darryl Robinson, TN Department of Education, School Nutrition Program, 1240 Foster Avenue, Nashville, TN 37243-0389.

Reporting

You will be required to report these funds separately. You may be required to report on the number of jobs created or retained because of this grant. USDA will provide us updates of reporting requirements as they are determined.

If you have any questions, please contact Darryl Robinson or Sarah White at 1-800-354-3663. Or, you may email your questions to Darryl.Robinson@state.tn.us or Sarah.C.White@state.tn.us.

Sincerely,

Sarah White, State Director

Cc: Robert Greene, Deputy Commissioner
SNP Staff

Attachments

System Summary Sheet (Return to TDOE)
Application – 2 pages (one per school, per piece of equipment) (Return to TDOE)
Scoring Sheet - for informational purposes only