

## 2024 Summer Programming Meal Options

Providing meals is a key consideration for districts when planning to support student learning during summer programming. There are two summer feeding programs that are available for communities to feed children during the summer: the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) is a continuation of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and is administered by the Department of Education and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is administered by the Department of Human Services.

Schools qualify to operate the summer feeding programs when 50% or more of enrolled students qualify for free or reduced-price meals using school or Census data. Once a site is determined as eligible, all meals are served at no cost to children attending the summer programming. Participating schools operating summer feeding programs must comply with all United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food program rules and regulations.

To determine if schools in your district are eligible to operate summer feeding, reach out to your local school nutrition supervisor. For the schools that do not meet USDA eligibility requirements for operating under the summer feeding programs, there are three possible options for providing meals to students during the upcoming 2024 summer learning programs:

1. **No Program at the Ineligible School:** Districts may choose to host summer programs at eligible schools in their district rather than ineligible schools/sites.
2. **Operate National School Lunch Program:** Districts can elect to continue to operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The School Food Authority (SFA) would be required to update its program/school applications for all schools that would like to continue providing meals for summer school through June and/or July in the Tennessee Meals Accounting and Claiming (TMAC) platform. TDOE nutrition field staff are available to work with and support application revisions with district nutrition supervisors.

All normal NSLP operating rules and regulations shall continue to apply during the summer months for reimbursement:

- a. If students qualify for free/reduced meal benefits, the district will be reimbursed at the free/reduced rate; if students do not qualify, the district must cover the cost of the meals.
  - b. Schools may supplement the cost of non-reimbursed meals through their general-purpose funds or summer programming funds.
3. **Use Alternative Funding:** Ineligible districts can consider other funding sources in making local decisions on how to provide summer meals.
    - a. Local general purpose funds or other local funding resources may be available to fund summer meals.
    - b. State funding for summer learning camps could be utilized. Using state funds would require districts to allocate funds from other areas of summer programming to pay for meals provided and should be reflected in the ePlan budget.