



May 9, 2023

United States Department of Agriculture,

As the voice of Child Nutrition Programs within the state of South Dakota, we see first hand the importance of school meals and students' learning. In review of the current proposal for Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, here are comments from the School Nutrition Association of South Dakota (SNASD):

- Child Nutrition Professionals have worked on the front lines serving students for the past three years. It has been a long three years with many challenges, including, but not limited to: changes in regulation, supply chain disruptions, and lack of staffing. As programs continue to get their feet under them, support and stability from the USDA is vital, not new restrictions.
- Child Nutrition Professionals are an adaptive group of people and willing to change; however, adequate time needs to be provided to make these changes and ensure they are viable both for the School Foodservice Authority and industry partners. Revised Dietary Guidelines are currently in progress and will be released in 2025, it is the most sensible to align the current Dietary Guidelines with changes in school meal patterns. The current USDA Nutrition Standards should be kept at their current levels for the next two years.
- Child Nutrition Programs are dependent on participation within the program. It is imperative menu writers have the flexibility to serve meals to students that they will actually consume. Regulations like stricter sodium guidelines and limiting flavored milk will have a negative impact on participation.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. As Child Nutrition Professionals, we will continue to do what's best for students and appreciate the USDA providing not only support and stability within our programs, but also an appropriate amount of time to carry out enforced regulations.

SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

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