

Healthy School Meals for All



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Agenda



- Participation Data
- Legislative History
- Logistics & Operational Challenges
- Meal Applications
- HSMA Grants

HSMA is a success!

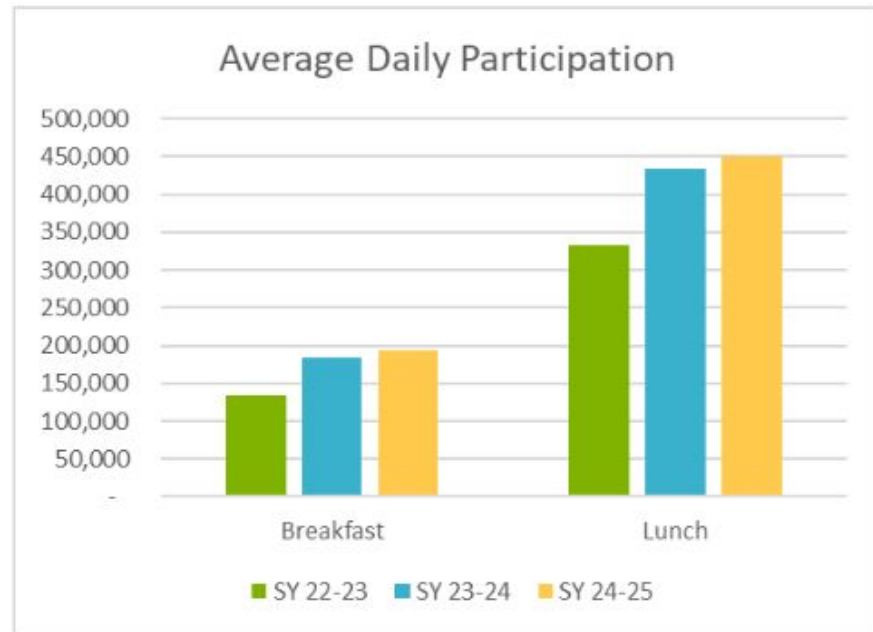
We are serving more meals than ever!

- Some schools serving 70% of population vs 45% pre-pandemic
- Statewide increases
 - Breakfast increased 37%
 - Lunch increased 30%
- Steady increases yearly

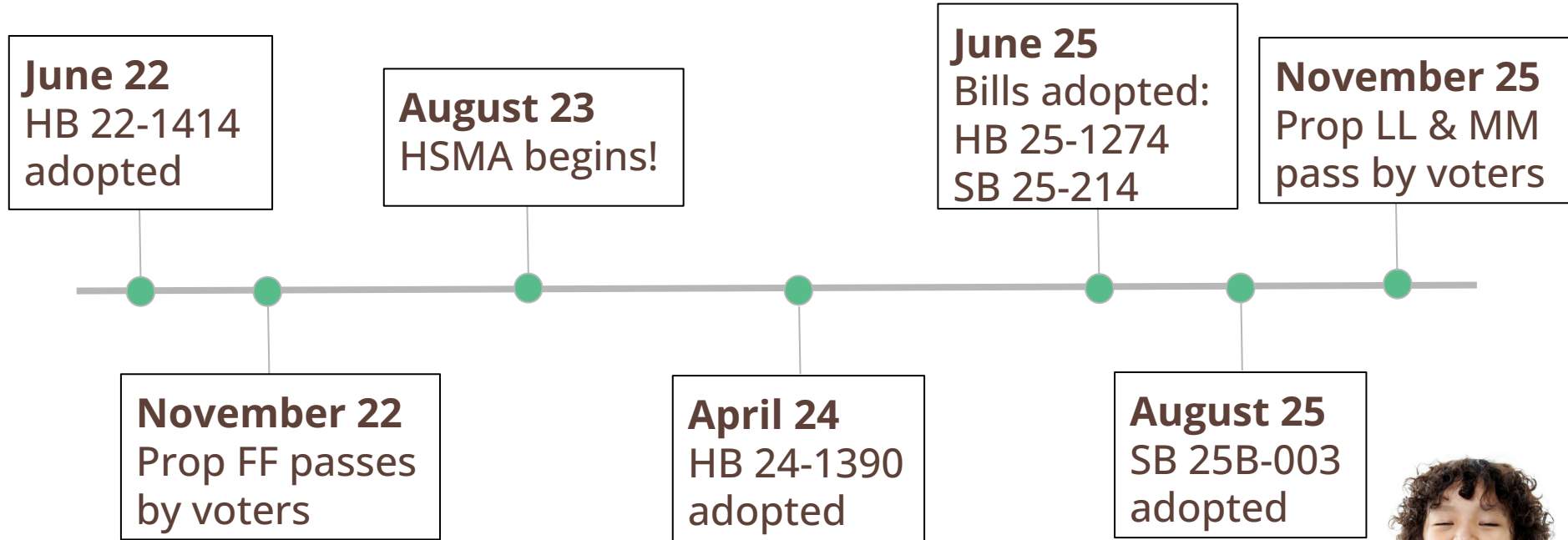


Participation Overview

- 100% of eligible public + charter SFAs have opted into HSMA
 - 194 sponsors; 1,803 sites
 - 1,424 sites operating CEP
- Meal participation continues to increase
 - Paid student participation



Legislative History



Advocacy

- **Messaging to your community**
- **How important school meals are for educational success**
- **Crucial to keep legislation whole**
- **CSNA lobbyist monitor**
- **Federal funding needs to increase**



Funding Priorities

- **Meal Reimbursements**
- **Payback State Ed Fund**
- **HSMA Grants**
- **SNAP**



Logistics & Operational Challenges



Logistics & Operational Challenges

- Staffing
- Line Speeds/Lunch times
- Food and Supply Storage
- Equipment capacity- cooking, holding and walk ins
- Menu considerations
- Special Diets
- Time to Eat



Meal Applications


- Continue encouraging families to complete applications
- Benefits to families
- Decreases State funding burden
- Income data helps your school's Title I funding
- CDE Outreach Tool Kit QR code



Local Food Program

- Funding for Colorado grown, raised, or processed products
 - Advisory Committee
 - Other Allowable Costs
- Non-competitive application due in Spring 2026
- Per meal allocation - sliding scale based on HSMA fund reserve (up to \$0.25/lunch served)



A man and a woman are standing outdoors. The man on the left is wearing a green baseball cap with a logo, sunglasses, and a dark green zip-up jacket. The woman on the right is wearing a dark jacket with a light-colored collar. They are both looking towards the camera. In the background, there is a red car and some trees.

IN THE STATE,
YOU KNOW, ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Local Food Grant...Highlights and Hurdles



More Colorado Food for our students!

- Procurement timelines
- Year 1 - Supply chain of local products for schools, is there enough?
- Spending the local food funds fully



Grant Considerations

- Local Foods Program Grant
 - Planning for 26/27 SY may already be behind due to unknown outcome of Nov election
 - Districts may not be able to spend all of 26/27 Allocation and need to return funds to State
 - Funds must be spend within 12 months
 - Majority of funds must be spent on unprocessed or minimally processed local foods
 - Districts may lack equipment, training, labor to process these items “in house”
 - Purchasing Policies in Districts
 - May create barrier to suppliers’ responsiveness
 - Higher limits for formal purchasing (up to Federal limits) makes it easier for District to find and contract with suppliers
 - CO producers will have limited supply for 26/27 due to late communication
 - Product that meets requirements may not even be available to Districts

Wages & Stipends Program

- Funding to provide wages increases or stipends to frontline foodservice workers
- Per meal allocation - sliding scale based on HSMA fund reserve (up to \$0.12/lunch served)
- Non-competitive application due in Spring 2026



Grant Considerations

- Employee Wages/Stipends Grant
 - Goal: Increase wages of some of the lowest paid employees in Districts
 - Money to frontline Nutrition Services staff only (90%+ of their time preparing and serving meals)
 - Cannot be used to offset “regular” annual increases
 - \$ Earned via lunches served 2 years prior (26/27 amounts will be based on lunches served in 24/25 SY)
 - Unspent grant money will go back into HSMA cash fund

Table Discussion

- What impact do you foresee for your community with the new funding for local foods? How can you support connections between school nutrition and local food providers?
- Do you think your district will utilize funding for wages or stipends for your front-line food service employees? What's your rationale?





Questions?

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1655 or (202) 690-7442; or

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