# Superintendent’s Memo #151-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: July 28, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Federal Fiscal Year 2019 Competitive Grant Application for the National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grant

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) of the availability of the NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funds. These funds will allow SFAs to purchase equipment needed to increase student access, enhance nutrition and food quality, and improve food safety of school meals.

### Key Focus Areas

For FFY19, grant funds must include the following as key focus areas:

* Equipment that improves the nutrition and quality of school meals;
* Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meal programs;
* Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations; and/or
* Equipment used to improve or expand participation in school meal programs.
* Equipment that will increase the use of locally grown agricultural products.

The following best practices can assist SFAs in their efforts to upgrade food service equipment to serve healthier meals:

* School officials and local policymakers should work collaboratively with parents, teachers, students, and funders to identify and implement strategies for meeting equipment, infrastructure, and training needs.
* Nonprofit and for-profit organizations that have an interest in improving children’s health education, school infrastructure, and community wellness should provide assistance to schools in acquiring the necessary equipment.

### Definition of Equipment

Equipment requests may include new equipment, renovation of equipment, or replacement of equipment. Regulations at 2 CFR Part 200.33 define equipment as tangible personal property having a useful like of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or $5,000. **However, for the FFY 2019 Equipment Assistance Grant, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment cannot be lower than $1,000.**

### Funding

Virginia has a statewide allocation of $626,277 for equipment purchases. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) may award partial grants to a school. For example, one piece of equipment may be funded instead of the two pieces requested, or a lesser amount may be awarded than requested. For each site, the reimbursement is limited to $50,000 total. Total requests can be greater than $50,000, but the SFA will have to make up the difference if their request is approved. Each school or school site can request up to two pieces of equipment. If a school requests two pieces of equipment, they must be prioritized in order of need.

Grant funds may be used to purchase new equipment, the replacement of old equipment, or the renovation of existing equipment, plus all associated delivery and installation costs. As with all federal grant funds, procurement regulations at 7 CFR Part 210.21 and 2 CFR Part 200.317-326 apply, and equipment competitively procured using grant funds must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable. For example, while using these grant funds to purchase a walk-in freezer for school food service, or a salad bar, may be an allowable cost, building an extension to a cafeteria would not meet the intended purposes of the grant. SFA’s are required to follow federal, state and local government procurement laws and regulations when purchasing equipment with these grant funds and provide for full and open competition. Equipment for which funds have already been obligated are not eligible for this grant.

### Selection Criteria

Virginia SFA’s are eligible to apply on behalf of their school sites that participate in the National School Lunch Program. The VDOE will award grants through a competitive grant process. Priority will be given to high need schools where 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free and reduced price meals. In addition, priority will be given to schools that did not receive a previous NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant. Each SFA will be allowed to submit an application for up to five schools. Schools will be prioritized as follows:

* Schools with free and reduced above 50 percent having never received an equipment grant;
* Schools with free and reduced about 50 percent that have previously received an equipment grant;
* Schools with free and reduced below 50 percent having never received an equipment grant; and
* Schools with free and reduced below 50 percent that have previously received an equipment grant.

Once the schools are prioritized, the application will be scored. The school’s free and reduced percent will be used as the base score. SFA’s must address how the equipment purchase will address one or more of the following focus areas:

* Equipment that improves the quality of school meals;
* Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meals programs;
* Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations;
* Equipment used to improve or expand participation in school meals; and/or
* Equipment that increases the use of locally grown food.

Each focus area has the potential to add five points to the overall score. The SFA must include a narrative explanation of the improvement the equipment will provide. After the application for each school is prioritized and scored, grants will be awarded to the highest scoring school per division. After the initial scoring and if funds are still available, additional schools will be selected using the same criteria.

### Submission Process and Timeline

**Applications are due August 9, 2019.** The complete grant application and supporting documentation must be submitted electronically to SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov.

The application can be found on SNPWeb in the download forms section. You can also request the application from SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov.

### Application Requirements

* Division Application – General Information, evaluation criteria, submission headlines, and the certification statement can be found in this part. Please complete this for the entire division.
* Site Application – For each school (site), complete the site application. Be sure to include the number of pieces of equipment and the total dollar amount requested for each school. Each site is eligible for up to $50,000. If your equipment needs exceed $50,000, include the actual cost of all equipment.
* Equipment Application – For each piece of equipment, complete this application. You may request up to two pieces of equipment per school valued at minimum of $1,000. It is imperative that you prioritize the equipment if requesting two pieces of equipment. You must also provide justification that supports the need for the equipment in one or more of the focus areas. Points are assigned for each focus area.
* Supporting Documentation – For each piece of equipment requested, there must be supporting documentation of the anticipated cost (i.e., price quote from vendor, instillation fees, local board approved Capitalization Threshold Policy, etc.)

Grants will be awarded by **September 6, 2019**. The school division must spend and claim reimbursement for all grant funds awarded by **June 30, 2020**. The grant award document for those divisions selected to receive funds will provide details on the approved schools, approved items of equipment by school, and the grant award amount for each equipment item approved. Grant recipients must comply with government-wide regulations, principles, and assurances, as described in Attachment A of this memorandum. The NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funds will be paid to awardees on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursement will only be for the actual expenses up to the award amount approved for each item. Funds not spent on the equipment approved for the grant award may not be spent on other equipment or for other schools in the division.

Please direct any questions via email to SNPpolicy@doe.virginia.gov or Denise Branscome, Policy and Research Specialist, by phone at (804)225-2330.

JFL/SCC/cc

### Attachment

1. [Government-Wide Regulations, Cost Principals and Compliances](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/151-19a.docx)