# Superintendent’s Memo #197-20 Revised August 21, 2020

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**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: July 31, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: SNP Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Competitive Equipment Grant Application-Revision

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) of a competitive process to distribute NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funds under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-94) for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020.

These funds will allow approved SFAs to purchase equipment needed to serve healthier school meals, improve food safety, and help support the establishment, maintenance, or expansion of the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

### Focus Areas for 2020

This year, grant applications should focus on:

* improving the nutritional and food quality of the child nutrition programs;
* increasing participation in the NSLP and SBP;
* adopting changes that provide more convenience and appeal for students;
* improving the safety of food served in all programs;
* increasing the use of locally grown foods;
* establishing, maintaining, or expanding the SBP; and
* assisting with alternative meal service for COVID-19.

### 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 life 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 2020 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 $621,646 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. SFAs are required to follow federal, state, and local government procurement laws and regulations when purchasing equipment with these grant funds and to provide for full and open competition. Equipment for which funds have already been obligated are not eligible for this grant.

### Selection Criteria

Virginia SFAs are eligible to apply on behalf of their school sites that participate in the NSLP. The VDOE will award grants through a competitive grant process. 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 having never received an equipment grant will be given priority** and the grants will be scored by the following criteria:

* demonstrated need;
* criteria used by the division to select the schools and equipment;
* child nutrition program participation;
* current financial status; and
* anticipated program improvement.

The SFA must address how the equipment purchase will address one or more of the following in their application:

* improving the nutrition and food quality of the child nutrition programs;
* increasing participation in the NSLP and SBP;
* adopting changes that provide more convenience and appeal for students;
* improving the safety of food served in all programs;
* increasing the use of locally grown foods;
* establishing, maintaining, or expanding the SBP; and
* COVID-19 meal service.

Each criteria will be scored based on the answers provided in the application. The SFA must include a narrative explanation of the improvement the equipment will provide and demonstrated need. After the application for each school is 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 September 4, 2020.** The complete grant application and supporting documentation must be submitted electronically to [SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov](mailto: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**](mailto:SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov)**.**

### Application Requirements

1. **Division Application:** General information, evaluation criteria, submission deadlines, and the certification statement can be found in this part. Please complete this form for the entire division.
2. **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 site. Each site is eligible for up to $50,000. If your equipment needs exceed $50,000, include the actual cost of all equipment.
3. **Equipment Application:** For each piece of equipment, complete the application. You may request up to two pieces of equipment per school valued at a minimum of $1,000 per piece of equipment. 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.
4. **Supporting Documentation:** For each piece of equipment requested, there must be supporting documentation of the anticipated cost (i.e., price quote from vendor, installation fees, local board approved Capitalization Threshold Policy, etc.).

Grants will be awarded by September 25, 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 all governmentwide regulations, principles, and assurances that will be provided upon approval. **The NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funds will be paid to awardees on a reimbursement basis.** Reimbursements 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 sites in the division. Grant recipients chosen for an award must comply with the regulations, principles, and assurances found in Attachment A of this memo.

If you have any questions, please direct them to Rhonn James at [rhonn.james1@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:rhonn.james1@doe.virginia.gov) or [SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov).

JFL/SCC/bdb

### Attachment

1. [GovernmentwideRegulations, Principles, and Assurances](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2020/197-20a.docx)