# SCNP Memo #2023-2024-79


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 16, 2024

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

## SUBJECT: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2024-2025

This memorandum provides guidance for establishing paid lunch prices for school year (SY) 2024–2025 using the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) tool as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

All school food authorities (SFAs) that collect payments for school meals in any schools must complete the PLE tool. This includes private schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) with day students. SFAs operating special provisions, such as the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), in some but not all schools, must complete the PLE tool for schools ***not*** participating in the special provisions. SFAs that participate in CEP divisionwide are **exempt** from completing the PLE tool.

SFAs with a positive or zero balance as of June 30, 2023, are **exempt** from PLE pricing requirements, but are required to complete the PLE Tool. This means increasing paid lunch prices is optional for SFAs with a positive or zero balance as of June 30, 2023.

**Action required:**

* All SFAs that collect payments for school meals must complete the PLE Tool.
* Listen to the new PLE Tool training located in the [VDOE-SCNP Virtual Virginia Training Hub](https://vdoelearning.catalog.instructure.com/courses/vdoe-scnp-training-hub). Download the [VDOE-SCNP Training Hub Instructions document](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/45473/638222469238930000) for assistance with course enrollment and navigation.
* SFAs with a negative balance in the nonprofit school food service account (NPSFSA) as of June 30, 2023, must establish paid lunch prices for SY 2024–2025 in compliance with PLE requirements.
* SFAs with an incomplete financial report in SNPWeb must also adjust their weighted average lunch price.

## Completing the PLE Tool

The VDOE-SCNP developed a new PLE Tool training video to walk SFAs through completion of the tool and obtain the data needed throughout the tool. It is recommended that all directors watch the training in its entirety before completing the tool. The PLE Tool training video is located in the [VDOE-SCNP Virtual Virginia Training Hub](https://vdoelearning.catalog.instructure.com/courses/vdoe-scnp-training-hub).

Instructions for completing the PLE Tool are in Attachment A. SFAs with a **negative** balance in the NPSFSA as of June 30, 2023, must establish paid lunch prices for SY 2024–2025 in compliance with PLE requirements, contribute non-federal funding sources in lieu of increasing prices, or split the costs by raising paid lunch prices and contributing non-federal funding sources. Depending on which option the non-exempt SFA chooses, the corresponding tab of the PLE tool must be completed.

Attachment B contains a list of SFAs and their financial report status as of June 30, 2023, along with other data needed to complete the PLE tool. Attachment C is a report of October 2023 paid lunch claims. Attachment D is a report of SY 2023–2024 paid lunch prices by SFA.

### For more Information

For more information, please contact your assigned School Nutrition Programs regional specialist or the SNP policy mailbox via email at SNPpolicy@doe.virginia.gov.

## Attachments

1. Instructions for Completing the Paid Lunch Equity Tool
2. June 30, 2023 Ending Balance Reported for SY 2023-2024
3. October 2023 Paid Lunch Claims
4. School Year 2023–2024 Paid Lunch Prices

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