



#011-22

Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #011-22

DATE: January 14, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Rosa S. Atkins, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **FY 2021 Competitive NSLP Equipment Grant Applications Requested**

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform school food authorities (SFAs) of the Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs' (VDOE-SNP's) request for applications for National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance grant funds for federal fiscal year (FY) 2021. Competitive equipment grant funds are authorized in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260). **Applications are due to the VDOE-SNP on February 16, 2022.**

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

Focus Areas for 2022

This year, grant application focus areas include:

- 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;

- increasing access to culturally inclusive meals; and
- assisting with alternative meal service for COVID-19.

Definition of Equipment

NSLP equipment grant applications may include new equipment, renovation of existing equipment, or replacement of equipment, plus delivery and installation costs. 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 FY 2021 Equipment Assistance Grant, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment cannot be lower than \$1,000.

Funding

The VDOE-SNP received \$636,672 in FY 2021 to competitively allocate based on a number of factors for equipment purchases. For each school, the sub-grantee award is limited to \$50,000 total. Total requests can be greater than \$50,000, but SFAs will have to cover any costs beyond the awards if their applications are 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.

Equipment competitively procured using grant funds must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable and follow federal, state, and local government procurement laws and regulations to provide for full and open competition. Equipment for which funds have already been obligated are not eligible for this grant.

Selection Criteria

SFAs are eligible to apply on behalf of their schools that participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP or the NSLP. The VDOE-SNP 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. 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:

- improve the nutrition and food quality of the child nutrition programs;
- increase participation in the NSLP and SBP;
- adopt changes that provide more convenience and appeal for students;
- improve the safety of food served in all programs;
- increase the use of locally grown foods;
- increase access to culturally inclusive meals; 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 February 16, 2022. The complete grant application and supporting documentation must be submitted electronically to the SNP Policy mailbox at SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov.

The application may be found in SNPWeb in the *Download Forms* section and is **Attachment A** to this memo.

Application Requirements

1. **Division Application (Part A):** 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 (Part B):** For each school, complete a site application. Include the number of pieces of equipment and the total dollar amount requested for each school. Each school is eligible for up to \$50,000. If equipment needs exceed \$50,000, include the actual cost of the equipment.
3. **Equipment Application (Part C):** 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 to 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 quotes from vendor, installation fees, local board approved Capitalization Threshold Policy, etc.).

Grants will be awarded by March 11, 2022. The grant award notification 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 piece of equipment approved. **The NSLP Equipment Assistance grant funds will be paid to awardees on a reimbursement basis.** Funds must be expended no later than June 30, 2023. 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 may not be spent on other equipment or for other schools in the division. Grant recipients chosen for an award must comply with the regulations, principles, and assurances found in **Attachment A** of this memo.

For more information

For more information on the FY 2021 NSLP Equipment Grant application or award process, please contact the SNP policy mailbox at SNPPolicy@doe.virginia.gov.

RSA/SCC/cej

- A. Attachment: [Equipment Assistance Grant Application FY 2021](#) (DOCX)