

Commissioner's Memo
6/17/2016

How to Operate a “Self-Sustaining” Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Memo Information

Memo Number **CNU-16-046**

Memo Date 6/17/2016

Memo Type Informational

Unit Child Nutrition

Regulatory Authority Arkansas Act 1220 of 2003, ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools

Response Required NO

Attention Federal Programs; Superintendents; Principals; General Business Manager

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Memo Text

In response to the growing amount of research supporting the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) has developed guidelines for schools who wish to implement a “Self-Sustaining” Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Recent research has provided convincing data that schools who serve fresh fruits and fresh vegetables outside of the breakfast and lunch periods for multiple years may see a decrease in childhood obesity numbers (body mass index) and an increase in overall fruit and vegetable consumption in children.

Schools who have been awarded a USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program grant and are receiving reimbursement should continue to follow the normal procedures that are reviewed in the annual FFVP Training.

Schools who have applied but have not been awarded a USDA FFVP grant, schools who have been FFVP schools in the past but are no longer eligible per USDA’s criteria, schools who have never applied for a FFVP grant, and schools of ANY grade combination (including high schools) are allowed to start a “Self-Sustaining” FFVP.

A “Self-Sustaining” FFVP will not receive reimbursement for items used in this program. Schools who participate will be responsible for identifying, obtaining, managing, and tracking their own finances. ADE CNU will review records during Administrative Reviews.

Schools will choose one or more of the following sources of funds for the “Self-Sustaining” FFVP:

- The School Food Authority has in excess of a three-month operating balance. If all Child Nutrition Program needs are accommodated first and these programs will not be compromised by allowing a self-sustaining FFVP, funds from the Child Nutrition account will be used to operate the self-

sustaining FFVP.

- Other local district (non-federal) funds will be used to operate the self-sustaining FFVP.
- A school-based organization or group will provide funds to operate the self-sustaining FFVP (Parent/Teacher Organization, local School Nutrition Association Chapter, student organization, etc.)
- A community-based organization or group will provide funds to operate the self-sustaining FFVP (civic organization, non-profit, church, etc.)
- A private business or individual will provide funds to operate the self-sustaining FFVP (local business, individual, or group)

Schools who decide to implement “Self-Sustaining” FFVP must agree to follow the intent and design of the USDA FFVP by completing the attached *Attestation for Self-Sustaining Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*. The attestation will be signed by school officials and ADE, CNU leadership, and copies will be available in the district/school and at the CNU. Attestation statements will be updated each year with the Child Nutrition Agreements and Policy Statements.

The intent of the FFVP is to serve only fresh fruits and fresh vegetables to students during school hours and outside of the breakfast or lunch periods. The attestation statement includes a list of unallowable items for both FFVP and “Self-Sustaining” FFVP.

A well designed FFVP or “Self-Sustaining” FFVP must also include a nutrition education component so that students may taste and learn about the fruits and vegetables they are consuming.

Schools are encouraged to review the *USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Handbook for Schools* prior to submitting an attestation statement.

To start a “Self-Sustaining” FFVP:

- Complete TWO copies of the *Attestation for Self-Sustaining Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program* and mail to:

Stephanie Alsbrook

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For additional information or questions, please contact Stephanie Alsbrook, Assistant Director of Healthy Schools at (501) 324-9502 or stephanie.alsbrook@arkansas.gov.

Attachments

- [CNU-16-046--Attestation_for_Self-Sustaining_Fresh_Fruit_and_Vegetable_Program.pdf](#)
- [CNU-16-046--May_2016_Final_Rules.pdf](#)